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LA WEEKLY

JANUARY 3-9, 2020 / VOL. 42 / NO. 71 LAWEEKLY.COM

HAPPY DAYS FOR AUTUMN KNIGHT

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By Brett Callwood

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Autumn Knight, courtesy of the artist

LA WEEKLY (ISSN #0192-1940 & USPS 461-370) is published weekly by LA Weekly LP, 724 S. Spring St., Los Angeles, CA 90015. Periodicals postage paid at Los Angeles, CA. Domestic subscriptions: \$55 for six months & \$90 per year. Postmaster: Send address changes to LA Weekly, 724 S. Spring St., Los Angeles, CA 90015. LA Weekly is available free of charge in Los Angeles County, limited to one copy per reader. Additional copies of the current issue of LA Weekly may be purchased for \$1, payable in advance at the LA Weekly office. Outside Los Angeles County, the single-copy cost of LA Weekly is \$1. LA Weekly may be distributed only by LA Weekly's authorized independent contractors or LA Weekly's authorized distributors. No person may, without prior written permission of LA Weekly, take more than one copy of each LA Weekly issue. For back-issue information call 310-574-7100. The entire contents of LA Weekly are Copyright 2014 by LA Weekly LP. No portion may be reproduced in whole or in part by any means, including electronic retrieval systems, without the express written permission of the publisher, LA Weekly, 724 S. Spring St., Los Angeles, CA 90015.



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PHO LEGEND

GO LA

FRI 1/3

ARTS

Getting Lit

Spoken word is one of the most mutable art forms, and it plays well with other forms of expression. Presented by **The Los Angeles Press and Red Light Lit**, this combo show “is a mash-up of live music, photography, storytelling and poetry,” set to a live score by David Williams and Dan Thomas and featuring musicians Kira Lynn Cain and Andrew Cervantes. Writers Miah Jeffra, Jennifer Lewis, Bernadette McComish, Mackenzie Studebaker and Linda Ravenswood will riff about sexuality, gender and the sharply contrasting vicissitudes of this thing called love. *The Parlour Room of Hollywood*, 6423 Yucca St., Hollywood; Fri., Jan. 3, 7 p.m.; \$10. (323) 463-0609, facebook.com/events/56354337797900. —FALLING JAMES

CULTURE

President Predator

Detailing Trump’s disrespectful, discriminatory and sexually abusive treatment of women into one fat yet concise chronicle of creepdom, *All the President’s Women: Donald Trump and the Making of a Predator*, released this past October, packs quite a (pussy) punch. From adulterous escapades to porn star pay-offs to pervy peeping backstage at teen beauty pageants to numerous allegations of inappropriate behavior, touching and groping, and even rape, authors Barry Levine and Monique El Faizy provide a painstakingly thorough account of the reality TV star-turned-top-politician’s history with women, attempting to explore where his misogyny stems from as well as how it reflects sexual culture in general. You’ll want to shower after reading it and

Bowie Unseen at
Art Angels Gallery
See Monday.

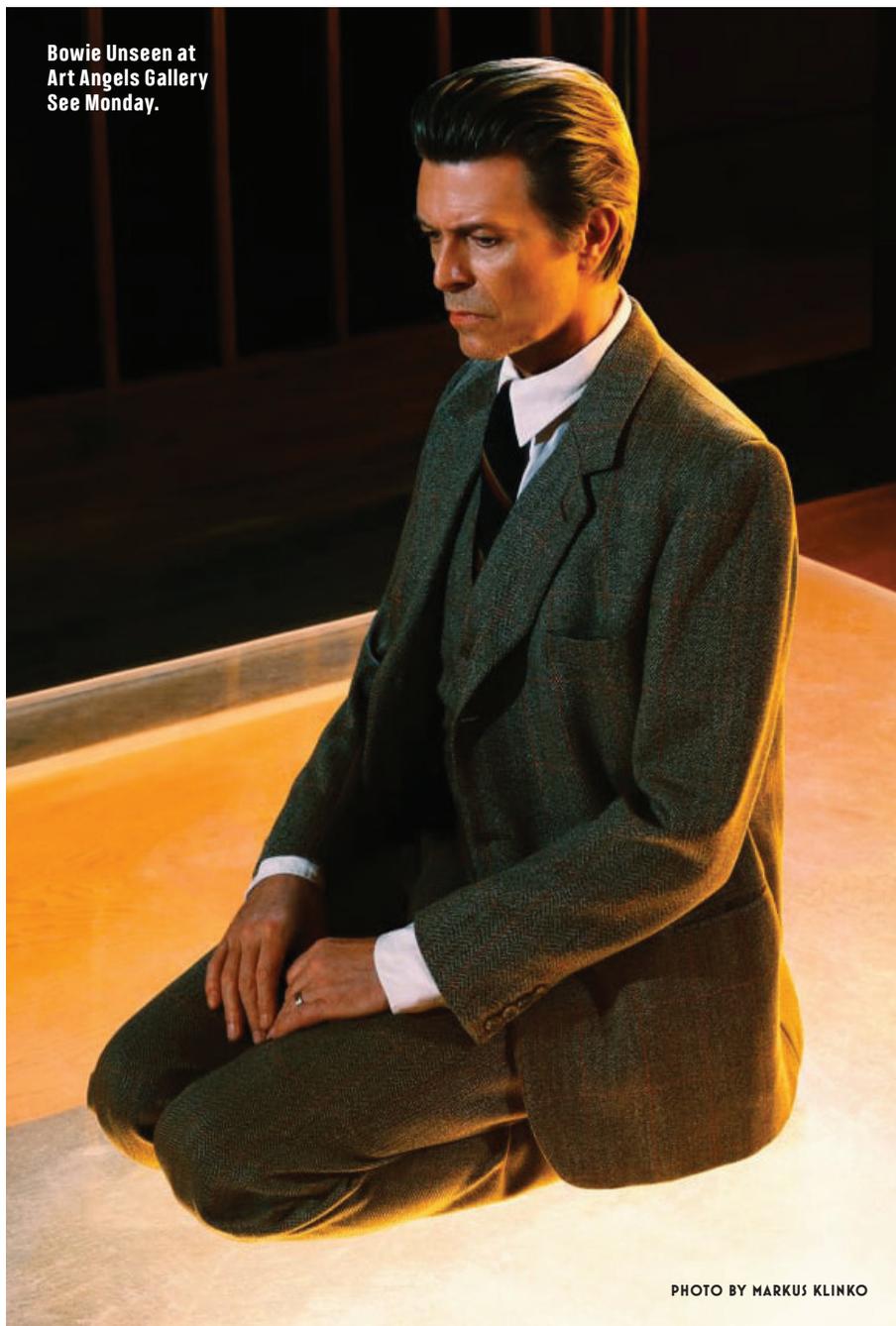


PHOTO BY MARKUS KLINKO

probably after hearing the lurid content covered out loud at this discussion and book signing with Levine. *Vroman’s*, 695 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena; Fri., Jan. 3, 7 p.m.; free. vromansbookstore.com/. —LINA LECARO

SAT 1/4

ARTS

Mod Squad

Dion Neutra, son of modernist architecture icon Richard, died in November at age 93. In 2014, Dion, an architect himself who fought to preserve the legacy of his father’s buildings and residences, transformed the office of their architecture firm in Silver Lake — opened in 1950 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places — into the Neutra Institute Gallery & Museum, which hosts art exhibits and other events. In memory of Dion’s passing, the gallery hosts **A Nod to Mod** photography group show featuring work by his brother Raymond, Deb Smith, Adriene Biondo, John Eng, Alan

Hess, Steven Schafer, Cameron Carothers, Scott Moody, Jack Laxer and *L.A. Weekly* contributor Nikki Kreuzer, paying tribute to not only Neutra designs but other examples of mid-century modern architecture. The exhibit takes place on two nights, the latter following a memorial service for Dion at the Neutra-designed Eagle Rock Center for the Arts. *Neutra Institute Gallery & Museum*, 2379 Glendale Blvd., Silver Lake; Sat., Jan. 4, 6-10 p.m. & Sun., Jan. 19, 5-9 p.m.; free. (323) 247-7113, neutra.org. —SIRAN BABAYAN

ARTS

Writing the Book on Art

From the 1960s right up until his death in 2016, Tony Conrad was a prolific, all-purpose experimenter whose innovations in avant-garde film, photography, minimalist music and activist performance art remain influential to generations of artists. But few even of his most die-hard fans have been exposed to his writings. The new book *Tony Conrad: Writings* from editor Andrew Lampert, collects nearly 60 pieces of Conrad’s

rare and unpublished texts, intellectual, witty and occasionally surreal compositions written between 1961-2002 and addressing art (his own and others’), music, politics and related theories. At today’s L.A. book launch, Lampert reads from the book, converses with writer Tosh Berman and filmmaker Tyler Hubby — the acclaimed writer and director of the recent award-winning documentary *Tony Conrad: Completely in the Present*. *Artbook at Hauser & Wirth*, 917 E. 3rd St., downtown; Sat., Jan. 4, 3 p.m.; free. [artbook.com/artbook-hw-la.html](https://artbook-hw-la.html). —SHANA NYS DAMBROT

CULTURE

Día de Los Doors

When photographer Henry Diltz shot photos for The Doors’ fifth studio album, *Morrison Hotel*, he took singer Jim Morrison and the band to L.A.’s Skid Row, where he captured them in the window of the Morrison Hotel for the front cover and lounging around at the nearby Hard Rock Café for the back cover and inner sleeve. The hotel closed down many years ago, but the building’s façade and front window will be restored for the fourth-annual **Day of The Doors** so fans can pose for pictures in the same place where the Lizard King once tarried. There will be a pop-up store to buy Doors memorabilia, and guitarist Robby Krieger will sign autographs and engage in an acoustic set with actor Dennis Quad, of all people. A screening of the documentary *When You’re Strange* is accompanied by a preview of another documentary, *The Doors: Break on Thru: A Tribute to Ray Manzarek*. *Morrison Hotel*, 1246 S. Hope St., downtown; Sat., Jan. 4, 3-11 p.m.; free-\$50. facebook.com/events/804043320033071. —FALLING JAMES

SUN 1/5

ARTS

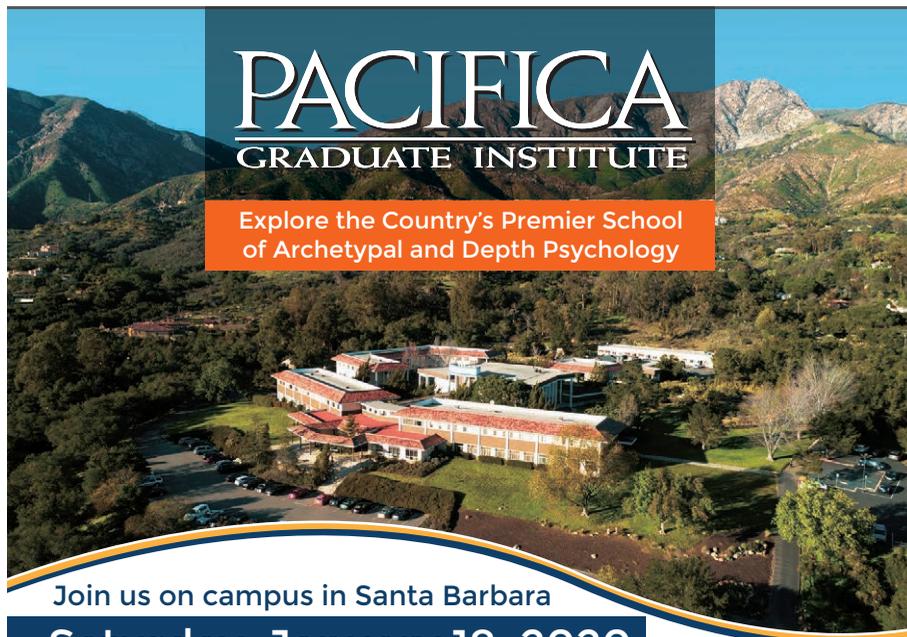
Dance Away the Heartache

The title of Olivia Mia Orozco’s *Toolbox* refers to the idea of an emotional toolkit, evaluating how equipped with self-awareness, clarity, empathy, patience and the capacity to heal, we are or are not when confronted with life’s traumas. In a melding of dance and movement performance with film, sound and environmental installation, Orozco and collaborators Julianne Mackey and Daniel Diaz create a sensorial expression of what building such a toolbox can feel like, from contemplation to catharsis, brutal honesty, and ultimate liberation. *Human Resources Los Angeles*, 10 Cottage Home St., Elysian Park; Sat., Jan. 4, 8 p.m. & Sun., Jan. 5, 2 p.m.; \$10-25. oliviamiaorozco.com/. —SHANA NYS DAMBROT

ARTS

Chants for a New Year

Over the past two months, the experimental ensemble Wild Up and its artistic director, Christopher Rountree, have been presenting *Darkness Sounding*, a series of performances of “mindful music during the darkest days of the year.” In the “**Satsang 3**” installment, vocalist-composer Odeya Nini alternately guides, soothes and challenges listeners in a kind of unpredictable music ritual involving a variety of chants, rounds and harmonies. “Together we will gather for a song circle raising our collective voices in shared vibration, sound and song,” the



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- Provide urine samples that will be tested for drug use

For attending all the assessment sessions, you will be paid \$230 (plus up to an additional \$100 if traveling to the UCLA research office).

Contact Information:

To take part in this research study or for more information, please call 1(800)581-9847 or visit <https://uclahs.fyi/uclacannabis> or scan the QR code to access the link.



event website promises. *Navel*, 1611 S. Hope St., downtown; Sun., Jan. 5, 7 p.m.; \$15. wildup.org/darkness-sounding. —FALLING JAMES

MON 1/6

CULTURE

Bowie Fan Must-See

Celebrity photographer Markus Klinko has shot everyone from Beyoncé to Lady Gaga to Kanye West, but his work with David Bowie just might be his most significant. **Bowie: Unseen** offers a unique perspective on the rock icon, highlighting his personality and style. The photo series — which Klinko shot during sessions for Bowie's *Heathen* album cover in 2002 — features never-before-seen editions from the photog, evoking Bowie's classy stature and zest for life in intimate shots that feel candid even while they maintain the mystique and glamour seen in high fashion set-ups. Dressed in a three-piece suit and meditating in one pose, and strolling with vicious dogs in others, Bowie: Unseen is a must see for fans who love the star man's music and image, but also miss his heart and his humanity. *Art Angels Gallery*, 9020 Beverly Blvd., West Hollywood; Mon.-Fri., 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. & Sat. noon-5 p.m. through the end of January. —LINA LECARO

TUE 1/7

FOOD

Santa Monica Restaurant Week

Susan Feniger and Mary Sue Milliken's long awaited and newly opened Socalo restaurant will kick off **Santa Monica Restaurant Week**, running from January 6-12. Thirty-seven restaurants will be participating in this year's event, celebrating the featured seasonal ingredient — the kumquat. The golden-orange fruit is found readily at farmers markets during the winter months. The grape-sized citrus is beloved for packing two flavors into its petite size; its edible peel is sweet, while the flesh is tart. There will be salmon poke with kumquat ponzu, serrano chile, cucumber, rice, fennel and sesame seeds at Socalo. Michael's Santa Monica will be serving Brian Bornemann's signature Baja-style yellow-tail set in an aguachile sauce with kumquats, and the Little Prince on Main Street will combine fall with winter in a pumpkin toast with burrata, kumquats and pumpkin seed crumble. *A complete list of participating restaurants and times can be found at santamonica.com/restaurantweek/.* —MICHELE STUEVEN

WED 1/8

ARTS

Silence is Golden

A new gallery season begins at LACE with its fifth Emerging Curators exhibition, the group show **SOUND OFF: Silence + Resistance**. Curated by Abigail Raphael Collins, who is an artist herself, the show takes a variation on the topi-

cality of political protest, examining not only the inalienable right and civic duty to speak out against injustice, but the complementary power of performative silence as a way of pushing back against industrial oppression and reclaiming personal dominion. Conceiving silence as "a way to honor the inarticulate, defy demands of production, prioritize deep listening, and refuse to incriminate," works by about 10 artists/activists are displayed alongside documentation of historical corollaries. *Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions*, 6522 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; opening reception: Wed., Jan. 8, 7-10 p.m.; on view through March 15; free. welcometolace.org. —SHANA NYS DAMBROT

COMEDY

Lots of Laughs

With Riot L.A. Comedy Festival, Funny or Die's Oddball Comedy Festival and Jack Black and Kyle Gass' Festival Supreme absent the last few years, the first **Southland Comedy Festival** might one day fill the big comedy-festival void in L.A. Twenty stand-up comedians will be spread out over five days at both traditional and indie comedy venues, from the legendary The Comedy Store, Hollywood Improv and The Ice House, to speakeasies and distilleries, to backyards and apartment living rooms. The schedule includes headliners such as *Schooled* star Bryan Callen and Tom Segura — whose showcase trifecta at Burbank's The Bunker features comics all performing in Spanish — as well as fellow comedians and festival co-founders Aaron Mliner, Stephen Furey and Richard Sarvate, also appearing on stage. *Check southlandcomedyfestival.com for exact times, locations and prices.* —SIRAN BABAYAN

THU 1/9

DANCE

Binging on Dance Films

In 2001, long before Instagram and Facebook streaming, Kelly Hargraves and Lynn Kessler founded **Dance Camera West**, a curated festival of dance films. Today, dance film and dance videos are everywhere and anywhere someone has a smart phone. The key to DCW's longevity and stature as one of the premiere dance film fests is its curated nature with festival audiences viewing the cream selected by organizers, led once again by Hargraves. Opening night of this year's three day festival boasts 17 short dance films plus two internationally acclaimed guests for a Q&A. Friday, there'll be another 17 films selected from around the world, and Saturday, promises a marathon wrap up with 26 more short films including the best submissions to the Dare to Dance in Public challenge organized by choreographer Sarah Elgart and *Cultural Weekly*. *REDCAT at Disney Hall*, 631 W. 2nd St., downtown; Thu., Jan. 9, 8:30 p.m., Fri., Jan. 10, 6:30 & 8:30 p.m., Sat., Jan. 11, noon, 3:30 p.m. 5:30, 7:30 & 9:30 p.m.; \$12 per program, \$72 all festival pass. dancecamerawest.org/. —ANN HASKINS

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FOOD

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L.A. Weekly's first look at The Conference Room in Playa Vista and its excellent meat preparations

BY DANNY PALUMBO

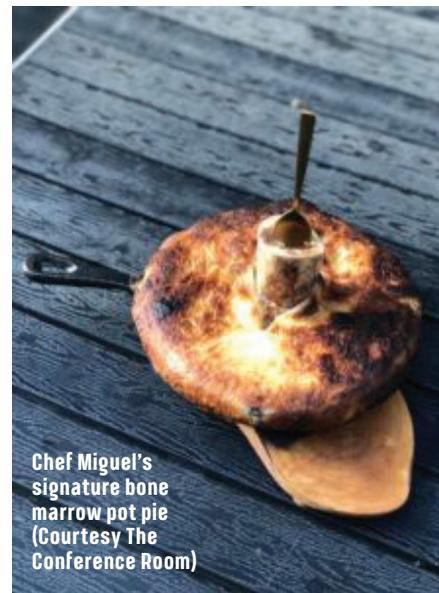
Pull into 12181 Bluff Creek Drive, and you'll see a giant KAWS statue — a towering, pop-art, blue Pixar-like creature with X's for eyes. It's so imposing and idol-like one would expect swarms of people to be actively praying to it, but here this gigantic blue dummy just sits restrained in the middle of a cul-de-sac surrounded by tech and social media companies.

YouTube and Google have base camps in Playa Vista, sure, but there's also places like Fullscreen Studios, a "social content company that provides creative, strategy and marketing services for both talent and broad clients in order to grow, engage and monetize their social audiences." Kelton Global, just across the way, is another brand strategy company that offers "cultural insights." Via their website: "We're passionate

about understanding culture, and its impact on human beings."

Where do these branding necromancers eat after a long day at the social media factory? Submitted for your consideration — The Conference Room, a hip new restaurant with chic architecture and a clear after-work aesthetic. Call it what you want — New American, a gastropub, elevated casual dining — there's a familiar style to the room and even the menu. Dig a little deeper, though, because The Conference Room is at its best when chef Miguel Aliaga gets to shine.

Throughout the menu Aliaga shows his continent-spanning roots. Born in Peru, he moved to Italy when he was young, then got his start cooking in Florence after finishing culinary school. Miguel's training there resulted in a spectacular attention to



Chef Miguel's
signature bone
marrow pot pie
(Courtesy The
Conference Room)

detail — each dish at The Conference Room possesses noticeable refinement.

Most impressive is just how well Miguel cooks with meat. The octopus possessed a flawless char, tender and meaty tentacles with a flavorful crust. It's a dish that's composed simply — grilled potatoes, tomatoes, olives and white vinegar — but those elements work well to highlight the octopus itself.

Less conventional is his lomo saltado, a perhaps new American take on the traditional Peruvian dish. Here he swaps out

the traditional french fries for potatoes au gratin. With a tomato coulis and red onion, the flavors here again err on the side of Mediterranean. Fatty, tender beef filets are seasoned with coarse salt and fanned out for sharing.

Aliaga's Italian prowess is also on full display — semolina gnocchi, broccolini ravioli and lasagna round out the pasta section of his menu, but his lobster spaghetti is gorgeous. Perfectly cooked spaghetti with thick chunks of lobster meat (claws, tail, knuckle, all of it), in a cherry-forward bisque that is exactly the right type of rich. That pasta itself is seemingly cooked in the bisque, as it fully takes on the liquid broth resulting in a silky, delightful noodle that's dense with flavor.

The Conference Room is the result of a thriving tech economy in Playa Vista; it doesn't pretend to be anything else. Even the way it's being marketed makes it sound like you're going to walk into a giant boardroom with a bunch of suits and new money, but it's a little more than that. You'll probably run into a couple branding savants, sure, and the KAWS statue out front feels like we've been praying to a PIXAR god, but it's worth checking out for chef Miguel Aliaga's skill and vision alone.

The Conference Room, 12181 Bluff Creek Drive, Playa Vista; (310) 862-6436, conferenceroomrestaurant.com.

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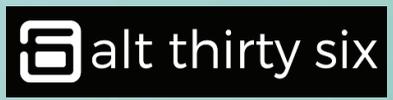
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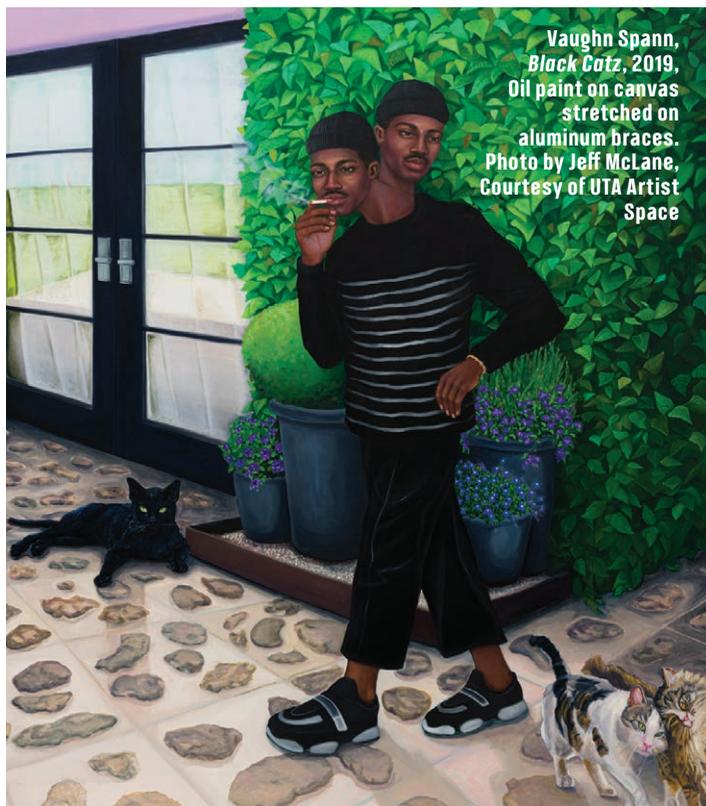


THE WAVVY CLOUD

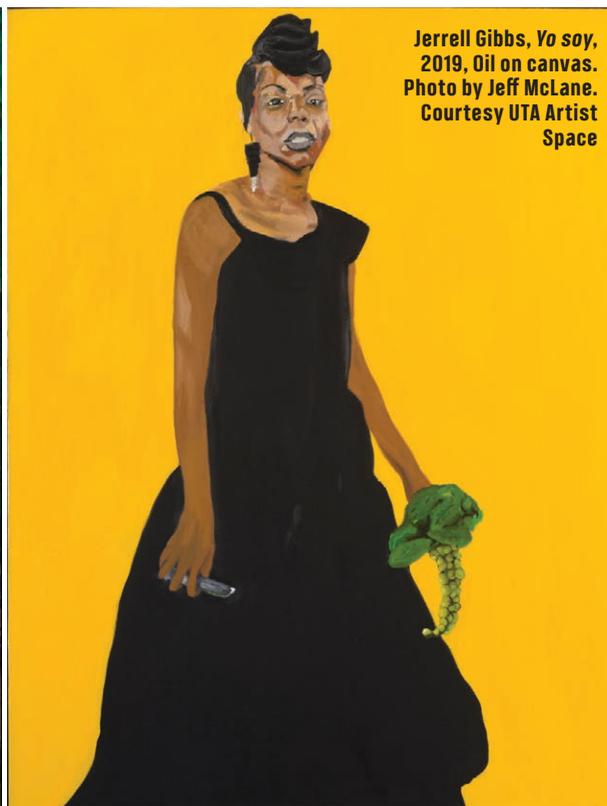
DISEMBODIMENT: PAINTINGS FROM THE BLACK VANGUARD

A new show at UTA offers a fresh take on representations of our bodies in contemporary art

BY SHANA NYS DAMBROT



Vaughn Spann, *Black Catz*, 2019, Oil paint on canvas stretched on aluminum braces. Photo by Jeff McLane, Courtesy of UTA Artist Space



Jerrell Gibbs, *Yo soy*, 2019, Oil on canvas. Photo by Jeff McLane, Courtesy UTA Artist Space



Jarvis Boyland, *Pop Out*, 2019, Oil on canvas. Photo by Jeff McLane, Courtesy UTA Artist Space

Six painters contribute significant large-scale works to a dynamic group show comprising a range of aesthetics, styles and narrative strategies, all centered around representations of the male figure, especially men of color. In *Disembodiment*, curator Mariane Ibrahim is committed to an updated canon which recognizes that a universe of stories and styles exists, created by black artists, depicting people, that are nevertheless not engaged — or, not only — in a dialog on identity. Instead, or additionally, these artists are advancing a broad, diverse and robust conversation with the very notion of portraiture across art history and fine art technique.

Although there is a good deal of critical theory scrutinizing the fetishization and othering of black bodies in Western art, and

also an active interest in works that unpack varieties of black experience, one thing that's lacking is parity in the canon, and the institutions. In the portrait and genre, artists frequently take inspiration from moments in their own everyday lives — be they solemn or celebratory, public or private, sexualized or serene, folksy or fantastical. This part of art history has, unsurprisingly, been dominated by the lived experiences of white men. White male ideas — and white male bodies — are posited as the norm, anything else is othered, strange, the exception and that is that.

The quiet subversion of a show like *Disembodiment* is to privilege the black artist's everyday body as a countercurrent to the status quo, and to examine the eclectic mannerisms of its authorship and expression on equal footing. Quiet not because

the work itself is subdued; it is anything but. Rather, the show's tactic is a quiet one: All the work possesses such presence, personality, advanced skill and distinctive voice that the fact of the painters all being black men — while remaining central — becomes, by curatorial design, incidental. It's just some flat-out incredible contemporary studio painting, and it belongs in the art history books on the merits, and that right there is Ibrahim's whole point.

Works like Jerrell Gibbs' have a cloistered awkwardness, a balance of stillness and wildness, that speaks to existential stretches of waiting and remembering. His way of moving freely between crisp rendering and schematic abstraction, and his penchant for earthy palettes, metonymic impasto and roughed-in settings has a certain literary

thinking things over.

Clotilde Jiménez uses collage as both a metaphor and an actual technique for building a composite, fluid identity and performing masculinity, in large scale works with inflections of cubism, Leger-style futurism, and even Willem de Kooning. Jonathan Lyndon Chase is also adept at infusing his paintings with the energy of performance, and in engineering a hybrid style of vibrant colors and striking lines. His interrogations of queerness in the odalisque modality are so lush as to be almost experiential. In this show, he tries something new — the extension of pictorial space into the real space of the gallery, by way of an installation of piled red shoes tumbling to the floor.

Finally, Jarvis Boyland is everything. His contributions are showstopping in their

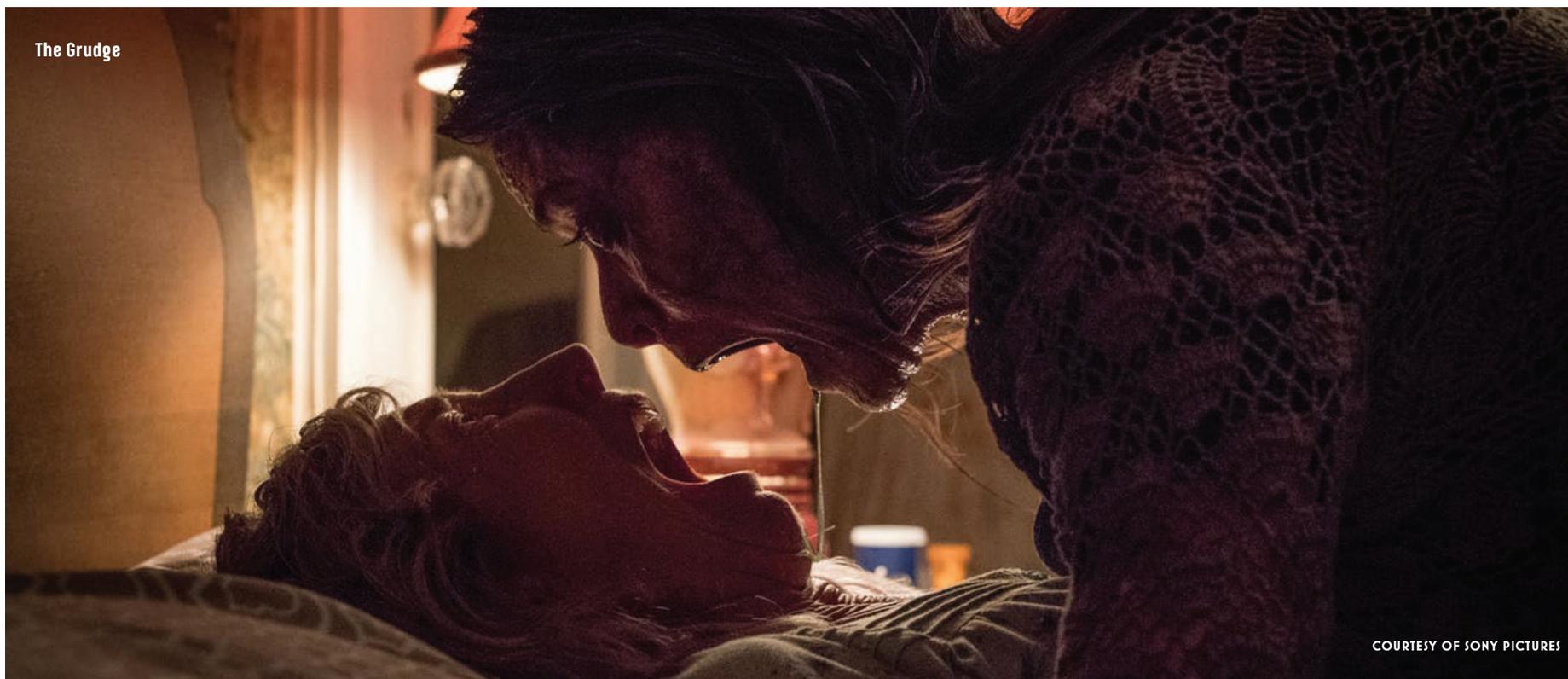
quality, like scenes from a novel.

Also interested in the forced intimacy of architecture and nature, as well as ways of depicting the multifaceted nature of human consciousness, Vaughn Spann brings humor and a chic, stylized wit to the scenario of a man on a walk, having a smoke to clear his head. At the same time, Spann's patient, almost devotional attention to endlessly detailed pattern and a slightly hyperrealist saturation and tight focus have a classically retro swagger inside a totally contemporary sensibility.

Marcus Jahmal's urban folk has a jaunty soulfulness, expressed in a looser, more pared-down style than Spann's, though he too is interested in the spatial incursions of architecture into the public space and the potential for abstraction to find a role within a scene — and in having a smoke while

flirty, perfectly formed, bohemian and self-conscious beauty. A love of rich textiles, shiny and translucent, animal prints, impossible expanses of aggressive deep pink, the elegant disarray of luxury, and a gender-fluid confidence all combines into disarmingly powerful portraits and interiors that give shades of Prince and Mickalene Thomas along with quirks of style that somehow channel the jazziness of the 1930s, the Pattern & Decoration moment of the 1980s and the Paul Smith selfie-wall present-day, all at the same time — while celebrating friendship and the timeless, poetic melodrama of a youthful inner life.

Disembodiment is on view through January 25 at UTA Artist Space, 403 Foothill Road, Beverly Hills; utaartistspace.com.



The Grudge

COURTESY OF SONY PICTURES

FILM

THE GRUDGE RISES FROM THE DEAD

Also: Pre-Hays Code film showcases in 35mm and a chance to be in the presence of cinematic heavyweights as they discuss *The Irishman*

BY NATHANIEL BELL

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

Opening wide
Friday, January 3

When Takashi Shimizu's *Ju-On: The Grudge* was released in 2002, smack dab in the middle of the J-horror craze, it was fresh enough to

stir up some U.S. box office commotion and inspire an American-made sequel — simply called *The Grudge* — two years later. The mania peaked with *The Ring* and *Dark Water* and reached its nadir with *One Missed Call*. Sony released a *Grudge 2* and even a *Grudge 3* — both of which were moderately successful. But what is this new *The Grudge* coming out in 2020, more than a decade subsequent? It was developed as a sequel — a *Grudge 4*, presumably — but it eventually mutated into that dreaded Hollywood species: the reboot. The latest installment in the franchise will introduce new ghosts and extend the mythology of the *Grudge*-verse while retaining some signature

images from the previous films. (To cite one example: the rotting fingers that emerge from a living character's scalp while shampooing.) Nicolas Pesce (*The Eyes of My Mother*) wrote and directed from a script by Jeff Buhler. The very good cast includes Andrea Riseborough, Demián Bichir, Betty Gilpin, Lin Shaye, and Jacki Weaver. The Newton Brothers composed the score. Sam Raimi is one of the producers.

Limited

Friday, January 3

Racy, funny and frank, films of the “pre-Code” era continue to fascinate. To welcome 2020, UCLA will feature a weekend of movies produced before 1934, when the Motion Picture Production Code began to be enforced in earnest. Kicking off the series — titled “**To Heck With Your Don'ts and Be Carefuls**” — is a pair of melodramas featuring Dorothy Mackaill, the British-born actress who began as a “Follies Girl” and worked her way up to leading lady. In *Safe in Hell* (directed by William Wellman) Mackaill plays a New Orleans prostitute grasping for transcendence. In *Party Husband*, she is a thoroughly modern woman married to a playboy. Both films will be screened in 35mm prints courtesy of the Library of Congress. *UCLA's Billy Wilder Theater, 10899 Wilshire Blvd., Westwood; Fri., Jan. 3, 7:30 p.m.; \$10. (310) 206-8013, cinema.ucla.edu.*

Saturday, January 4

The American Cinematheque and the Hollywood Foreign Press Association co-present their annual **Golden Globe Foreign-Language Nominees Seminar** at the Egyptian Theatre. Instead of screening the five top foreign-language films of 2019, the directors of those films will engage in an onstage, round-

table discussion. Pedro Almodóvar (*Pain and Glory*), Bong Joon Ho (*Parasite*), Ladj Ly (*Les Misérables*), Céline Sciamma (*Portrait of a Lady on Fire*) and Lulu Wang (*The Farewell*) are this year's participants. Journalist Silvia Bizio will moderate the panel. There will be a reception in the courtyard following the event. Tickets are free with RSVP. *Egyptian Theatre, 6712 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Sat., Jan. 4, 1 p.m.; free with RSVP. (323) 466-3456, americancinemathequecalendar.com.*

Martin Scorsese and Robert De Niro will be in town for a 45-minute discussion about their decades-spanning creative partnership, followed by a screening of *The Irishman*, their latest epic collaboration. If you haven't seen this three-and-a-half-hour made-for-Netflix contender yet, this could be your last shot at experiencing it in a theater (for a while, anyway). \$40 puts you in the presence of these two cinematic heavyweights. *Egyptian Theatre, 6712 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Sat., Jan. 4, 6 p.m.; \$40. (323) 466-3456, americancinemathequecalendar.com.*

UCLA's pre-Code weekend concludes with a pair of classic, flamboyant musicals choreographed by mad genius Busby Berkeley. **42nd Street**, featuring a chorus girl (Ruby Keeler) who gets catapulted to Broadway stardom, is now considered the archetypal backstage musical of the period. **Gold Diggers of 1933** is Warner Bros' triumphant follow-up, starring Joan Blondell as a torch singer and Ginger Rogers at her most glamorous. Seeing these blockbusters of a bygone era on the big screen — in 35mm — is one of the great privileges of living in a city that values film history. *UCLA's Billy Wilder Theater, 10899 Wilshire Blvd., Westwood; Sat., Jan. 4, 7:30 p.m.; \$10. (310) 206-8013, cinema.ucla.edu.*



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TELEVISION

RISING TO NEW HEIGHTS

Amazon's *The Aeronauts* soars thanks to more than one kind of chemistry

BY ASHER LUBERTO

Escapist entertainment soars to new heights in *The Aeronauts*, Amazon's new epic based on a true story following hot air balloonists in 1862 England. The journey, which spans across London, follows a scientist (Eddie Redmayne) and his pilot (Felicity Jones) as they set out to break the altitude record. It's not an easy journey for the characters, but it's smooth sailing for audience members unafraid of heights. The protagonists ascend above the clouds to keep their everyday troubles out of sight. But for James Glaisher (Red-

mayne), the voyage is also like a space odyssey, about science. He's a meteorologist who believes that at 35,000 feet it's possible to track weather patterns. He was right, of course. We now know how to track the weather, and its importance to crops and preventing hazards is extremely significant. In the 1800s, however, the English squawked at Glaisher's theories the same way they did dental care.

The denial sends Glaisher running around London in search of a pilot. Even though a man named Henry Coxwell was the actual pilot who accompanied Glaisher

to 37,000 feet, Amelia Wren (Jones) is a more suitable character for this airy blockbuster. She cartwheels through the crowd on the day of takeoff, and as thousands of people watch Glaisher setting up his scientific instruments, she entertains them in grand fashion. "Today, history will be made!" she exclaims.

The movie takes off once they do. In a balloon that looks like a carnival tent and a basket that can barely fit two people, Wren and Glaisher marvel at the majestic vistas and valleys. Looking down at the buildings below, they discuss the hardships they have left behind. She lost her husband (Vincent Perez) to a ballooning accident three years prior. He is dealing with a dying father (Tom Courtenay) and a fading career. Together they develop a charming friendship.

The likability of the characters should be credited to Jones and Redmayne, who previously co-starred as Stephen Hawking and his wife in *The Theory of Everything*. Their chemistry is equally convincing here. When the two make fun of each other's professions, or open up about what the trip means for them personally, you can sense that it didn't take much acting for Jones and Redmayne to create characters that like each other, since they are already friends offscreen.

And director Tom Harper brings spell-

binding imagery to their flight. During the first leg of the trip, they cruise past puffy cumulonimbus clouds. Shot in an actual hot air balloon, with the CGI added in post production, these wide screen moments are a symbol for the characters' independence. Only in the stratosphere do they have the freedom to forge their own paths.

But problems eventually arise. One scene sees the balloon being tossed around in a thunderstorm, while another shows sweat turn to snow at 34,000 feet. When Glaisher passes out due to lack of oxygen, Wren has to climb up the side of the balloon by herself to open up the frozen valve on top. In a breathtaking shot, the camera itself seems to be frozen to the netting, as Wren scales the side of the balloon as if she was climbing a mountain.

There are cinematic problems along the way, too. Flashbacks to the events before takeoff weigh down this otherwise exciting adventure. Nearly half the runtime takes place on the ground, which means half the film consists of Glaisher being mocked for his scientific beliefs and Wren being scolded for being a woman with aspirations. When in the air, though, their problems, as well as ours, fade away in the clouds.

The Aeronauts is now streaming on Amazon Prime.

HAPPY DAYS FOR AUTUMN KNIGHT

The L.A. native who's been compared to Lana Del Rey has her first performance at the Troubadour

BY BRETT CALLWOOD



Singer-songwriter Autumn Knight was raised right here in Los Angeles, and she's already been compared to Lana Del Rey. It's not beyond the realms of possibility that she achieves a comparable level of success too; Knight has a similarly unique and entrancing vocal style, and a ton of rootsy pop tunes.

She received her musical education early — she says that she has been singing for as long as she can remember.

“There’s a video of me at 2 years old dancing and singing to *Flashdance* that’s hilarious and such a fun reminder that I was born to perform,” she says. “My parents used to tell me that I started singing before I could talk, but I was around 10 years old when I started taking

private voice and piano lessons. I found an instant connection with the piano and by age 13, I wrote my first song ‘Don’t Ask Why’ — it was all about listening to your inner voice. I sang daily and practiced with different instruments, and it helped that my parents loved music as much as I did. They were always firm believers that if you have a dream, nobody can tell you to stop chasing it. When I was accepted into Berklee College of Music and was able to hold my own amongst some of the best musicians in the world, that is when I knew that I was destined to make music a career.”

Knight describes her sound as electropop, something that evolved over time culminating in recent full length *Here and Now*. She pulls influences from all over the place, including

Adele’s vocals, Dua Lipa’s live performances, Lennon Stella’s aesthetic and, again, Del Rey’s lyrics. The release of *Here and Now* in November is the proudest moment of her career so far.

“It’s something I’ve been working super hard towards and to see it come to life was a dream come true,” she says. “The album release party was at Warwick in Hollywood, and I performed six of my 11 songs. My heart was pounding out of my chest, but when I got on stage and saw everyone singing along to the first song ‘Outline’ I was so happy and proud — it was one of the most surreal moments of my entire life. Meeting everyone after the show was the cherry on top. It’s fulfilling and humbling connecting with fans because they’re the ones who help fuel your passion to create music and inspire you to dive deeper into yourself.”

alone and have a voice in the world. Writing each song on the album, I tried to do just that, and the fans at the album release party were receptive to it. As for the critics, it’s nothing I can’t handle — I focus on the positive. I keep my circle tight and everyone in it is there for a reason so I make sure to always hear my team out.”

This week sees Knight take another huge step up as she headlines at the historic Troubadour. The artist is stoked.

“To get a chance to perform on the same stage as Prince, Coldplay, The Strokes, Red Hot Chili Peppers, James Blake and Lana Del Rey is epic,” she says. “I believe you can manifest things into existence and this was definitely on my vision board. I’m looking forward to channeling all the star power that has rocked out before me and leaving my own original mark. I don’t take any opportunity, big or small, for granted. That is something people learn about me right away.”

Knight will be performing nine songs from the new album in Hollywood as she begins her 2020 tour. She will, she says, leave everything on the stage.

“My bandmates and I have spent many late nights and early mornings rehearsing to make the Troubadour performance the best one yet, and I’m so grateful they understand my dedication and intent for my music,” she says. “We have an undeniable bond, and when we step on stage, we know how to turn it on and connect with the audience. We can’t wait to share a part of our hearts with the audience. After the show, we will be out in the crowd interacting with fans, and I’m really looking forward to that. Growing up, I had always wished I could have one-on-one experiences with performers, so now I try to lend myself to the fans as much as possible — on and off the stage.”

With that show out of the way, Knighty will be releasing the rest of her tour dates as she looks to hit every major U.S. city, then maybe Europe and the rest of the world.

“Music is a universal language, and I feel so strongly about my new album and its message that I want to share it with as many people as possible,” she says. “Fans can also look forward to some new music. I’ll be releasing a couple of new singles throughout the year about life on the road and stepping into my power as a woman and musician. The whole women’s empowerment movement has really inspired me and made me feel fearless in my career and personal life. Female musicians in the industry like Taylor Swift, Billie Eilish and Lizzo, for example, are not playing games when it comes to ownership over their identity, creative process and music, and it’s motivating to see such confident and authentic women at the forefront of pop music, hip-hop and so many other genres.”

She wants to explore acting too — looks like 2020 will be a busy year for Ms. Knight.

Autumn Knight plays with Aurora Vice, Brothers Beard, Tiffany Madadian and Burbia at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, January 4 at the Troubadour.

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MUSIC

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FRI 1/3

T.S.O.L.

@ THE REGENT THEATER

Featuring original members Ron Emory (guitar), Mike Roche (bass) and Jack Grisham (vocals), T.S.O.L. continue with their unique combination of savage intensity and fulsome power leavened with morbid humor, which stands out even more in an era when so much punk rock is now fangless. In a 2018 feature, Grisham told us that, "I would be a fucking excellent anarchist or storefront preacher. However, I don't think any man should be in charge of any other man. The trouble is, you can't really step away from ingrained values." Grisham kinda gets his wish every night, preaching to his gathered and ever-loyal congregation. Smut Peddlers, Piñata Protest and DFL also play. —BRETT CALLWOOD

Jane Monheit

@ FEINSTEIN'S AT VITELLO'S

Oakdale, N.Y., jazz-pop singer Jane Monheit is developing a solid reputation for blending the traditional with contemporary, and we'll get to hear that at this Studio City gig. "Everything I'm singing now is a reflection of my truest self," she says on her Facebook. "After all this time in the industry, after touring for 13 years, it's time to just be me, with complete and utter freedom." That freedom can be heard on her new ninth full length studio album *The Heart of the Matter*. "I knew that I wanted the material to be chosen based on the lyrical content", she continues. "Over the years, my singing has really taken on that focus." Sounds perfect. —BRETT CALLWOOD

SAT 1/4

Viernes 13

@ THE PARAMOUNT

Viernes 13 mark their 20th anniversary with an all-ages show at longtime Boyle Heights ballroom The Paramount. Led by founding guitarist Mario Luna and singer Juan Pulido, the L.A. group started out as a ska-punk band, but their energetic sound also encompasses reggae, surf and rockabilly. Viernes 13's 2015 album, *Thirteen Rules*, is a quint-essential assortment of their multiple styles.

Cedric Burnside



PHOTO BY ABRAHAM ROWE

Such trippy dub-reggae interludes as "Let Me Tell You" lead into lively, horn-pumped ska workouts as "The Lucky One." Chris Silva's frenetic rockabilly bass launches "6 Feet Deep," while "Sex on the Beach" is an unexpectedly sunny slice of summer soul. Punk and rockabilly tempos collide on "The Devil Rides," whereas "Working Man's Chant" is a jumping burst of ska. —FALLING JAMES

Missing Persons

@ GALLAGHER'S PUB HB

One of the coolest quirks in rock & roll, alongside the fact that Belinda Carlisle was once the drummer in the Germs, is that Dale and Terry Bozzio, founding members of new wave band Missing Persons, met while working with Frank Zappa. They married and formed this band in 1980 with other Zappa contributors, then enjoyed success throughout that decade thanks to the albums *Spring Session M*, *Rhyme & Reason* and *Color in Your Life*. The band split in 2004 and, but for a brief reunion in 2009, eventually got back together in 2011. Nowadays, Dale Bozzio is the one remaining member from the "classic" lineup, though they still deliver in the live environment. They play all over SoCal, so don't worry too much if you miss this one. —BRETT CALLWOOD

SUN 1/5

Epica

@ THE REGENT THEATER

It won't surprise anyone to learn that a band called Epica plays symphonic, anthemic, fucking epic metal. This group formed in the Netherlands in 2002, and they've released seven studio albums, the most recent of which is 2016's *The Holographic Principle*, although the *Epica vs Attack on Titan Songs* came out at the end of 2017. Regardless, the band has a ton of awesome music in their arsenal and we'll be getting a whole bunch of it at the Regent. Also on the bill is Nekrogoblikon, the insane metal band with the singer who has taken the form of a goblin. What better way to shake off the cobwebs at the start of the new year? Valkyrium also plays. —BRETT CALLWOOD

MON 1/6

Kate Clover

@ BOOTLEG THEATER

Decked out in matching black suits and ties, Kate Clover and her band look like a late-

1970s power-pop band or perhaps members of Blondie circa *Parallel Lines*. And while the L.A. singer's original songs are loaded with catchy pop hooks, she plays with a hard-driving punk power that's closer to the Ramones than The Knack. "Woke up with the television telling them lies," Clover declares on her 2019 debut single, "Channel Zero." She goes on to rail about the CIA mind-control program Project MKUltra as distorted punk guitar chords rage behind her, indicating that Clover has got a lot on her mind and is anything but a typically escapist and retro power-pop wannabe. She brings in her band for the first evening for her free Monday-night residency in January. —FALLING JAMES

TUE 1/7

Cedric Burnside

@ THE ECHO

As the son of drummer Calvin Jackson and the grandson of the iconic bluesman R.L. Burnside, Cedric Burnside knows a thing or two about the blues. And unlike so many revivalists who water down the blues with slick arrangements and flashy solos, Burnside draws from the rawer and rhythmically driving style of Hill country blues. Although Cedric first made his name as a drummer for T-Model Ford, Jessie Mae Hemphill, The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, Paul "Wine" Jones and R.L. Burnside, among others, he revitalizes the blues on guitar in recent performances. His 2018 album, *Benton County Relic*, is a stripped-down collection of funky blues tracks like "Get Your Groove On" and such primal, throbbing passages as "Typical Day." Burnside proves that the blues can still be chilling on haunted, scarifying songs like "Death Bell Blues." —FALLING JAMES

Good Riddance

@ THE GLASS HOUSE

The world certainly needs bands like Good Riddance, the politically outspoken punks from Santa Cruz who have made a career out of spreading decency and progressivism while educating their many fans since forming in '86. Their latest album, 2019's *Thoughts and Prayers*, is the first since Trump took office, and the song titles certainly reflect the toxic atmosphere that the president created. "Our Great Divide," "No King But Caesar," "No Safe Place," "Pox Americana" — you can immediately see where they're coming from. But then that's what they've always done — observed what's going on around them and interpreted it. They're damn good at it too. Youth Brigade, The Last Gang and Sharp/Shock also play. —BRETT CALLWOOD

WED 1/8

Tina Schlieske

@ THE MINT

When Tina Schlieske isn't putting her personal spin on jazz standards on her recent release *Sinatra to Simone*, she switches gears completely by using the energy of punk rock to make *Pussygrabber*, a boldly confrontational, politically charged, anti-Trump collaboration

with Genital Panic. The Minneapolis native first came to attention with the more conventionally bluesy 2005 debut album, *Slow Burn*, a collection of soulful ballads and classic-rock reveries that featured ace guitarist James Burton (Elvis Presley, The Everly Brothers). If it isn't clear by now, Schlieske can do it all, a range she further demonstrated on 2009's *Evil Gal Blues* and 2013's *Pinned Up*, in which she saluted her Minnesota roots by remaking songs by Prince, Soul Asylum and Bob Dylan (she does a mournfully moving version of The Replacements' "Sixteen Blue"). —FALLING JAMES

THU 1/9

Mayo Thompson

@ HAMMER MUSEUM

Mayo Thompson has drifted in and out of a variety of scenes and identities over the course of his life. He got his start in the '60s as singer-guitarist with The Red Krayola, a Houston group that made other psychedelic bands of the era sound safe as milk in comparison. In the 1970s, he was an assistant to artist Robert Rauschenberg, but by the end of the decade Thompson had relocated to England, where he wound up recording classic releases by The Fall, The Raincoats, Cabaret Voltaire, and Stiff Little Fingers. Along the way, he recorded the 1970 solo record, *Corky's Debt to His Father*, an overlooked collection of cracked and arty folk songs that set the template for lo-fi, indie-pop styles decades later. Thompson performs the album in its entirety for only the third time ever, in a free concert at Hammer Museum. —FALLING JAMES

Motionless in White

@ HOUSE OF BLUES, ANAHEIM

Like Dunder Mifflin, Motionless in White are from Scranton, Pennsylvania, and the gothic/metalcore outfit have been steadily building their reputation since forming in 2005. Unlike the American version of *The Office*, Motionless in White have been steadily getting better as time has passed, and 2019's *Disguise* album was quite brilliant despite a mixed reception from critics. Also performing out in Anaheim is Columbus, Ohio metal band Beartooth — and fair play, that's an excellent double bill. "We're really loud, and like to break stuff," Beartooth say on their Facebook profile. Probably not many acoustic tunes then. —BRETT CALLWOOD

Wand

@ THE ECHO

Such is the blossoming popularity of L.A. band Wand that they're playing two consecutive nights at The Echo, on Thursday and also Friday. Musically, they play a sort of dreamy, synth indie pop that manages to retain a classic, familiar feel while not sounding at all dated. That's confirmed by a quote they put on their Facebook page which reads, "Isn't it funny to be a skeleton, playing a new song like it's an old one." *Laughing Matter* is their latest album and it's chock-full of quality tunes, including the hypnotic and slightly off-putting "Scarecrow. Keep your eye on them. —BRETT CALLWOOD



Upcoming Events.

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January 11, 2020

Los Angeles CineFest
January 12, 2020

Los Angeles Short Film Festival
March 14-15, 2020

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May 30, 2020

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May 31, 2020

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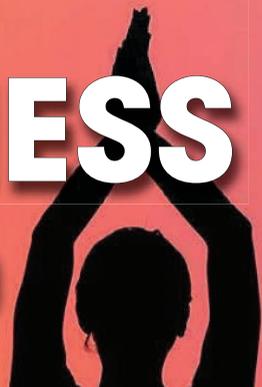
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