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PINK ROZAY AND JUSTICE: RICK ROSS TALKS 2020

The hustler wants to bring you the gas and social justice

By Jimi Devine
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ON THE COVER: photography by JLN Photography/Shutterstock
STREET VENDOR VIOLENCE SPARKS COMMUNITY PROTESTS

Despite formal legalization, eloteros and other vulnerable street vendors are still targeted, or worse

BY ISAI ROCHA

A recent trend of violence toward migrant sidewalk food vendors has emerged in the U.S. — particularly in areas with large immigrant populations, such as L.A. Several cases have found these sellers robbed, beaten and in some instances even killed.

Most recently, a June 30 incident in Long Beach saw two armed men beat and rob a 50-year-old street vendor named Bilifo Fernandez, as they then pulled out guns and pointed them at witnesses. The incident was caught by a nearby Ring security camera and authorities are reportedly still searching for the suspects.

These vendor incidents have not always been recorded on video, however, the use of cameras has recently made people more aware that it is happening.

“It’s nothing new to me,” said Mario “Scar” Ponce, best known for the “Cholos Try” YouTube series. “All this stuff on social media they keep showing about street vendors being harassed, getting bullied, it’s nothing new. Now we have cameras, so everybody gets to see what’s going on in today’s world.”

Ponce helped organize a Griffith Park hike in support of vendor Aguilar’s Fruit in Hollywood, who he said was being “harassed by the community” in the Hollywood Hills. The video of the hike garnered more than 6 million views through different social media channels and directed attention to the issue of sidewalk vendors being targeted for abuse.

The community action also highlighted immigrant sidewalk vendors and their legal statuses in the U.S. Ponce’s video showed people driving up to the Aguilar’s Fruit stand, calling them “illegal” and continuously asking if they have a license to sell.

With the legalities of sidewalk vending being a point of contention with Los Angeles Public Health, in 2017 Los Angeles legalized sidewalk vending. The L.A. City Council passed the ordinance with an 11-2 vote making the practice legal, but with permits issued by the Board of Public Works.

“We cannot continue to allow an unregulated system that penalizes hardworking, mostly immigrant vendors with possible criminal misdemeanor charges, particularly in the current political environment,” then Councilman Jose Huizar said after the motion passed. “These people are not asking for a handout, they are asking for an opportunity to lift themselves up and provide for their families.”

The council later implemented vending fees, which are $541 as of July 1, 2020, but has yet to decide how its rules will be enforced.

In L.A. and across the state, some, however, have taken enforcement into their own hands. On July 5, a video was posted of a man confronting an elotero who was selling from his cart at Hart Park in Bakersfield. The man, later identified as Davo Larranaga, was recorded by the vendor’s daughter, as Larranaga told the family, “You’re taking food from my daughter’s mouth. Is he paying for a permit? Is he? Yes or no?”

Larranaga operates a Snowie Shaved Ice truck, and when the company heard of the incident they made it clear that Larranaga was not an employee, as they sell to independent contractors. They added that they would be “looking into the agreement of his contract.”

After the incident was posted on social media, South L.A. rapper King Lil G got ahold of the elotero and his family donating $1,800.

“We gotta keep looking out for each other,” King Lil G said on Instagram. “I am very aware that one gesture won’t stop our people from going through this type of nonsense, but at least we are all aware that we have to look out for one another especially when our innocent street vendors are being targeted.”

In Austin, Texas, a recent street vendor incident turned fatal as 68-year-old Adalaido Bernabe Urias was shot and killed while selling ice cream, or “paletas,” near an Austin apartment complex.

The robbery occurred at 3:10 p.m. in broad daylight. Residents heard two gunshots and later found Urias lying on the ground. Austin’s homicide division said that Urias was likely targeted because food vendors often carry cash, according to KXAN.

The killing of Urias sparked anger within the Chicano community, as his incident combined with other shootings, stabbings and general harassment of migrant street vendors struck a chord with Mexican Americans who grew up eating “paletas,” “elotes” (corn on the cob), hot dogs, fruit and other foods that are sold through mobile carts.

Videos then started circulating of vendors being escorted by people with guns, vowing to “protect” them.

More and more videos of street vendor incidents have been posted online, many ending in violence, but in the case of Kenia Barragan, she posted a video of a southern California tamale vendor, who she approached and gave $50 to. The 94-year-old man named Jose Villa erupted in tears, as the gesture was overwhelming to him. Barragan then created a GoFundMe in support of the man, raising more than $64,000 as of this writing.

“...He’s 94 years old and uses a wheelchair to get around,” Barragan wrote in the fundraiser’s description. “He can barely afford to buy his coffee and bread in the morning to eat, and doesn’t have money to pay for a phone, let alone his medication. I gave him my number and told him to call me whenever he needs anything... this breaks my heart.”

Sidewalk food vendors have become part of Los Angeles culture over the years, as you roam the streets of South L.A., East L.A., downtown L.A., and many cities in the county, you can find a food cart on any given corner. Communities have rallied around them, but only time will tell if the violent incidents will stop.

“You can’t have a neighborhood without the street vendor,” concluded “Scar” Ponce. “Just come out and support your local street vendor... just know that you’re doing something good in your heart.”
NEW LEGAL THC PRODUCT IS COSTING DISPENSARIES BILLIONS

As recreational marijuana becomes legal in most states, some people are confused as to what they can and cannot buy. Depending on where you live, there are multiple considerations to be aware of, including legal grey areas. Thanks to these clever legal loopholes, you may be surprised at the strength of some of the products you can now purchase online. Delta-8 THC, a new cannabis product on the market, is a perfect example of how these loopholes are able to be exploited for your consumer benefit. This newly legal drug is costing dispensaries an estimated million in revenue now that consumers can get it online through HempireDirect.com quickly and without hassle.

What is Delta 8 THC?
Well, it’s similar to Delta 9 THC, but an altered form of it.

Delta 8 THC is an isomer of CBD and another cannabinoid found in hemp and hemp extracts. Despite similar forms and names, Delta 8 THC and Delta 9 THC are distinctly different compounds with distinctly different characteristics. While Delta 8 THC was made fully federally legal by the H.R. 2: The Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018, Delta 9 THC was limited to a maximum content of 0.3%. Which is one of the reasons Delta 8 has become a fast favorite.

Here are some common questions about Delta 8 THC, including how to take it and where to buy it:
What is the best way to take Delta 8?
We recommend vaping Delta 8. Vaping Delta 8 THC is slightly different than consuming it orally. When vaped, Delta 8 THC is known to boost mood and promote calm feelings, while simultaneously giving energy and a motivational boost.

How is Delta 8 made?
Delta 8 THC is made via a chemical reaction of cannabinoids, catalysts, and solvents, so it is important to identify what is and isn't in the finished oil. This is why you want as close to 100% identifiable compounds as possible. In addition you want to look at trace elements like heavy metals and pesticides to further ensure product purity.

What is the Delta 8 THC Vape Cartridge made with?
The Delta 8 THC Vape Cartridge is made with Delta 8 THC, CBN, CBC and terpenes.

What is Delta 8 good for?
Users report feeling:
Happy
Calm
Motivated
There are no long-term, definitive studies on the effects of delta 8 THC. Everything that follows is based on firsthand user experiences with Delta 8 THC and is provided as information only. It is not medical advice, and the Delta 8 THC vape cartridge does not diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any diseases, conditions, or any other ailment. You may have an entirely different experience. We do not suggest in any way, shape, or form, that your experience will be the same.

What is the difference between Delta 8 and Delta 9?
While Delta 8 THC and Delta 9 THC have similar names, they are distinctly different compounds with distinctly different characteristics, and there are clear-cut reasons why Delta 8 THC was made fully federally legal by H.R. 2: The Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018 and Delta 9 THC was limited to a maximum content of 0.3%.

Does Delta 8 make you high?
This Delta 8 THC vape cartridge can be intoxicating to some people. Do not drive or operate any machinery while using this product. Consult a doctor before using this product.

The Delta 8 THC vape cartridge is known to boost mood and promote calm feelings, while simultaneously giving energy and a motivational boost.

Is Delta 8 legal in my state?
The Delta 8 THC vape cartridge is legal according to federal law and many state laws. Delta 8 THC extract is 100% derived from legal hemp and does not contain more than 0.3% Δ9THC. However, we do not guarantee that this product is legal in your state or territory and it is up to you to determine that. Hempire Direct retains the right to not ship to any states or territories where local laws conflict with H.R. 2: The Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018, also known as the 2018 Farm Bill. Hempire Direct is not responsible for knowing whether this product is legal in your state or territory and you assume full responsibility for all parts pertaining to your purchase.

Due to Delta 8 THC either being illegal or not explicitly legal according to state laws, this product does not ship to the following states: Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Delaware, Idaho, Iowa, Mississippi, Montana, and Nebraska.

Is Delta 8 legal federally?
YES.

Delta 8 THC has a scary name due to everything we’ve been trained to think over the past 90 years regarding Delta 9 THC, but Delta 8 THC is federally legal and legal in most states in the USA thanks to H.R. 2: The Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018, also known as the 2018 Farm Bill.

Will Delta 8 show up on a drug test?
Delta 8 THC metabolites may trigger many drug tests looking for Delta 9 THC metabolites. As a precaution, you should not take this product if you need to pass a drug test.

Where can I buy Delta 8?
Purchase Delta 8 THC easily and legally at www.HempireDirect.com
As the chat started, Ross was already burning blunts again. Not catch the virus. /T_his writer,

than “pandemic” that would frequently dot our

industry’s most beloved, hated and imitated

months, but the dynamic entrepreneur that

axed any plans Ross had for the road in recent

album in a while and stuck at home instead

mushy. With all the random OG phenos out

ing to get straight to the point. I started smoking

your nose it’s going to get your approval. Once it

In those 14 years since, Ross found the strain

to start a new business endeavor around some-

cookies, I’m excited to be doing this. I feel like

fans the best cannabis experience they expect

reached the heights it was supposed too.

He said it changed the game without a doubt,

wave of Miami indoor, commonly called Krypt.

as the key to all of it.

thought-leader by their side as an equal. With

of Whoopi Goldberg, none did it with a real

vorite shit over the last damn near 30 years, ”

Ross recounted.

Berner, an executive who’s become

rapper who’s been chasing that taste, “

/They had a strain called Private Reserve, ever

this spot called the Green Gourmet Room.

said. “I smoke gas. I smoke stank. And after I

it. I just want to break it down myself and enjoy

of three strains.

bis tastes could be. He knows that just because

before getting into how specific varying canna-

struments. It’s about building a brand that Cook-

just about associating an artist with amazing

scenario is the jar smells like a gas station, he

replied, “Texaco, man. I’m one of those dudes...

said. “I smoke gas. I smoke stank. And after I

“We took a lot of time to curate these strains

thing he loves with that kind of exceptionally

to start a new business endeavor around some-

He knows that just because

to have faith in it./uni00A0

#10 and London Poundcake #75, so it’s a safe

developing the artwork and expanding the line

coming to get straight to the point. I started smoking

to have notes of both — what Ross considered

bis genetics’ lineage and how much Ross loves

other growers under the flag, you’re talking

To Ross, the biggest cuts were

against the most common cannabis. We asked Ross, the successful entre-

is now a part of, Ross cites only associating with

once Obama took the Oval Office people

In those moments, elite Cookies genetics that

now getting pumped out by the mass producers

pot was defined compared to the cuts that were

So the cut Ross would consider great was

those are some of my favorite strains, my fa-

Cookies and the efforts put in by Jigga and the

ment. Ross enters the cannabis space, with the exception

which he would eventually bring to market had

of millions of listeners

“Hustlin’,” but that’s

14.1 to be exact. Now less

Rick Ross still sees every month on Spo-

unnecessary

users. When some of his celebrity peers have now

While some of his celebrity peers have now

The excitement is mutual.

“First time I went to L.A., I want to say ‘04, ‘05,

Papoose, which is great. Papoose is a...]

“Most definitely, “ he quickly replied,

When asked how he continues to stay moti-

Ross said the Pink Rozay line will launch in

best when he’s smoking hard. “I’m rolling

but once Obama took the Oval Office people

and only sleep four hours, as long as I’m smok-

in the various aspects

at the end of the decade were how exotic

the warehouse scene exploded in the 2000s,

the things that really meant something to him

thoughts that stuck in my mind. Shoutouts to

cookies. ”

the best cannabis experience they expect
I
t's been 14 years since “Hustlin’,” but that’s also the number of millions of listeners Rick Ross still sees every month on Spotify alone — 14.1 to be exact. Now less than a year removed from his biggest album in a while and stuck at home instead of supporting it on tour, he spoke with L.A. Weekly on his jump into the cannabis industry and this undeniable moment in time history will remember.

As with all artists, social distancing guidelines axed any plans Ross had for the road in recent months, but the dynamic entrepreneur that stopped counting at 30 Wingstops stayed busy. Especially with a new project close to his heart: your nose it’s going to get your approval. Once it touches your lungs, it’s going down. I’m just going to get straight to the point. I started smoking when I was 13, growing up in Miami. We had the worst weed you could ever find. Coming from all different parts of the islands.”

The gas is a way to affectionately describe some good pot once the strains start to get mushy. With all the random OG phenos out there these days, as long as it has a strong fuel aroma you know you’re getting something reasonably dope. Pink Rozay pairs Lemonchello #10 and London Poundcake #75, so it’s a safe bet to have faith in it.

Ross said eventually he started to see the first brand that would reflect the world-class cannabis genetics’ lineage and how much Ross loves awesome pot.

Ross told the Cookies team that Lemon Pepper hot wings are his favorite flavor and the flavor terpene profile he was hoping for in what he would eventually bring to market had to have notes of both — what Ross considered a perfect marriage of aroma.

“This is the first run of a collaborative brand Cookies has embarked on, spending a lot of time and effort to curate Ross’ favorite strains, developing the artwork and expanding the line that’s currently in multiple states,” Tori Cole of Cookies told the Weekly. “For Berner, it’s not just about associating an artist with amazing genetics. It’s about building a brand that Cookies had done this kind of collaboration before getting into how specific varying cannabis tastes could be. He knows that just because he thinks something is the gas, others might not find it as exotic. So he hoped to capture something for everyone in the initial lineup of three strains.

“It’s got to be heavy, man. It’s got to sit there with me. I got to really roll it. I got to want to roll it. I just want to break it down myself and enjoy these moments before I smoke this dope,” Ross said. “I smoke gas. I smoke dank. And after I smoke it I’m going to give you my opinion, that’s what I’m going to go by.”

When this writer told Ross the best case scenario is the jar smells like a gas station, he replied, “Texaco, man. I’m one of those dudes... what’s a good way to describe... aggressive ambition. I’m just being creative.”

Ross said the Pink Rozay line will launch in all Cookies flagship markets.

Ross generally goes hard in the various aspects of his life and career. He feels like he’s really at his best when he’s smoking hard. “I’m rolling good THC, you know, so I can get up at 6 a.m. and only sleep four hours, as long as I’m smoking good I don’t get sleepy.”

When asked how he continues to stay motivated through all these various enterprises he is now a part of, Ross cites only associating with the things that really meant something to him as the key to all of it.
“If I name the 20 brands I’m a part of, it’s really things that only go with my lifestyle,” he told the Weekly. “Cannabis, Champagne, Wingstop, my music and artists, the list goes on. But it all revolves around Rozay, it’s nothing I get to go out of the box to do. You know what I’m saying?”

“Rozay is the ethos that makes all those things happen,” this writer asked.

“Right,” Ross snapped back. “Straight up, you know what I’m saying? And that’s what keeps me moving.”

Ross said he doesn’t wake up from a long night and get bummed about doing some interview. “I say, homie, get me a drink. I’m finna roll up, because during the Rona nobody else can roll me up nothing. The Rona changed the game. The days of having my shit rolled up? I need that no more. I’m rolling my own, you may have the Rona. So that’s how we doing it.”

As for staying motivated during a pandemic, Ross said that’s when you pull out your best game. “The days of having my shit rolled up? I’m saying?”

Ross bought a pound of weed a week before our interview. By the time we jumped on the call, he said he was about halfway through it. Ross believes the reason he’s able to smoke pounds to the face these days is because of the defining characteristic his mother passed on to him: Don’t ask for anything. From pushing carriages for old ladies to the stuff he’d eventually rap about, it was all about the hustle well before 2006.

“Thirteen, I was washing cars,” he said, “I loved to crank up an old Chevy. I loved to listen to the music. And I’d just be looking around. Like I said, aggressive ambition. I’m just going to always do a bunch of shit.”

That ambition would end up being the subject of the now New York Times bestseller Hurricane: A Memoir by Rick Ross. Ross teamed up with Neil Martinez-Belkin on the effort that dropped last fall. Ross also recently told The Breakfast Club a movie was in the works.

“There is most definitely a lot of discussions going on but I’m just sitting back,” Ross said, when asked if there were any updates. “I’ve never had a problem with being a student. This was my first time writing a memoir. It was successful and I’m thankful everybody supported it and now they are discussing it becoming a film. So I’m sitting back watching the big boys talk.”

Regardless of what happened with the film, Ross just closed the deal for his second book. “It was a huge sum I couldn’t believe. We just closed it, this is the first time I’m speaking on it, maybe 48 hours ago.”

When asked if the public should expect a wave of crazy albums and pandemic mixtapes dropping in the not too distant future, Ross was optimistic.

“I believe you will because I’ve almost completed an album that I wouldn’t have had the time too,” Ross said, noting he originally had a three-month tour planned instead of more studio time. “I just had the time to really sit down and collaborate. Get on the phone with a few artists, big boys, and talk some heavyweight shit. Because there is a lot more purpose right now.”

The rapper believes now is the moment for artists to make more noise than they ever did. The killing of George Floyd tore his heart apart; “I’m sure I shed a tear,” Ross said. He believes the messages we are now discussing in the wake of Floyd’s killing are subjects he’s spoken on in past music.

Ross has had a long history with America’s current racist-and-chief. Five years ago, then just a shady-landlord and Moscow condominium salesman, Trump got Walmart to pull Ross’ Black Market album over the line “assassinate Trump like I’m Zimmerman.”

Ross would later tell Rolling Stone about the controversial line, “I would never advocate violence on Trump or anyone. It’s lyrical assassination. That’s me being a poet, putting words together in my art form, with no violence in my heart at all,” he said. “Clarify that. Matter of fact, my cameraman was Trump’s caddie at his golf course for five years, and he says Trump is cool as fuck.”

Ross also discussed including his own encounters with law enforcement in his memoir. “These are things, unfortunately, as a black man we’ve been dealing with for years and years,” Ross said. “It’s just come full circle and is being addressed.”

“I’m waiting for the smart dudes to step up and discuss what’s the first five things we need to happen,” Ross added. “That’s what we need to happen. We need to have the smart dudes step up and clarify. Motherfuckers that know the Constitution, and the language, and all that. Because I know what the fuck I feel and I know what I want, but I want to let the motherfuckers who know what’s going on step up in there — and if I agree with it, I’m going to push it with them.”
CANNABIS

THE YEAR IN GLOBS 2020
A look at the decade of dabs
BY JIMI DEVINE

While 7/10 won’t be the same this year, there are still plenty of things to celebrate about the decade in hash and just how far things have progressed.

We can honestly say hash saw more progress in the last decade than the last 1,000 years. Sure, butane honey oils weren’t a new idea in the 2000s, but by the time we got to the waxes we ended that decade with, the progress was rolling.

At the time, in 2010, I was working the counter of a hash bar in Berkeley. That pretty much meant lighting coals and making sure people didn’t burn themselves in the process of trying to get high. In that transition phase for concentrates, I watched people dab everything from cold water bubble hash to some of the nicest butane-based extractions of the moment. Those are more commonly known as BHO, short for butane hash oil. I was also buying the hash for the club. In those days it consisted of crude to slightly refined BHO extractions with an oily or waxy viscosity, water extracted bubble hash that looked like dirt or blond sand depending on quality, pressed Moroccan and Nepalese styles, and Shiva Crystals.

There was also this weird early CO2 extracted stuff called gold dust you had to keep in a freezer because the future isn’t always shelf-stable at first. And in addition to the coals people were using, I saw the first generation of steel, titanium and quartz nails.

I continued to follow the evolution of hash over the years for various publications, and last year I got to serve as a judge for the Emerald Cup’s BHO liquid and solid categories. From that perspective, those poop soup trim runs of 10 years ago were still an important step to the whole nug showcase hash of today. We would never want to go back to the days of open blasting. Mainly because of the pyrotechnic displays that came with it on too many occasions when people’s houses exploded. In addition to danger and an excessive amount of empty butane cans littering the Redwoods and the Valley alike, one of the worst parts about the era had to be how bad people were at purging BHO.

Purging is the critical process after the hash has already been produced. After the first steps in making hash, there are a ton of residual solvents left over. In the end, an extractor wants to cook off those residual solvents in an above-average quality vacuum oven — this stuff is going in your lungs.

Eventually, like all things in the hash evolutionary chain, connoisseur-level consumers became aware of these best practices. You could think of it as being similar to when...
RICK RO$$

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Research Description & Purpose
The goal of this study is to learn about areas of functioning in cannabis users. Information will be collected using individual assessments over the course of 12 months. This research is being conducted by UCLA researchers Dr. Yih-Ing Hser and Dr. Larissa Mooney, and is funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

Would the study be a good fit for me?
This study may be a good fit for you if:
• You are 14 years or older
• You use cannabis regularly

What would happen if I took part in the study?
You would be asked to:
• Attend 4 assessment sessions where you will be asked questions about your cannabis use and daily life.
• Provide urine samples.

This study will not provide cannabis.
For attending all the assessment sessions, you can earn $230 (plus up to an additional $100 if traveling to a 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://uclabs.fyi/uclacannabis or scan the QR code to access the link.

Researcher:
Dr. Yih-Ing Hser

Research Team:
Behavioral Research Specialists, LLC

Contact Information:
Please call 1 (800) 581-9847 or visit https://uclabs.fyi/uclacannabis or scan the QR code to access the link.

Are you a regular cannabis user?

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Protocol ID:IRB#18-003803 UCLA IRB Approved Approval Date: 5/7/2020 Through: 5/6/2021 Committee: Medical IRB 3

->11) folks know the wood some distilleries and wineries use in barrels to age their products, except you were trying to avoid damaging your body.

One might even argue the early to mid-2010s hash consumer picked up their eye for quality products faster than beer, wine and spirit enthusiasts because they had too. Those other products had a regulatory structure for quality and safety. Testing concentrates wasn’t mandated until the latter part of the decade. So understanding the quality of the hash you were looking at as we moved on from dry sifts and cold water bubble hash basically was a survival instinct, at least if you were really trying to party. Even then we smoked some nasty stuff.

Long before the vape oil epidemic took over last summer’s news cycles because of people using sketchy additives to stretch their oil, the savvy hash consumer knew there were plenty of sketchy dabs out there. Eventually, the quest for well-purged materials in addition to safer processing hardware led to shatter. Keep in mind we’re still talking trim run at this point. The jump to closed loop extractions and proper labs is where things took off quickly. As this was happening we figured out how to take the plant’s waxes and fatty lipids out in processing. This led to the first slabs of shatter hitting the market. Shatter would go through extended purges, turning it into a brittle and clear amber material. This was the first real deal science hype. But it was dry.

Shatter would prove king for a bit since there was so much trash wax to hold next to it for comparison. Even if there was wax that was done better than shatter, much of the consumer base just presumed the shatter was better. But as we got into newer terpene reclamation processes that preserved all the flavors, things got a bit slushier and a lot tastier. We started seeing these nice sugars that felt as clean as shatter with more dynamic flavor profiles, but BHO still wasn’t for everyone. Some believed seeing these nice sugars that felt as clean as the stickiest diamonds which tend to have better bang for their buck since there isn’t a bunch of extra terp sauce — I think the range is nearly unfathomable.

Diamants were just the THC material in hash formed into bigger crystals, hence the diamond name. In the legal market, they can range from a few little diamond chunks in a hash sauce for a gram to a bunch of microbead diamonds which tend to have better bang for the buck since there isn’t a bunch of extra terp sauce leftover.

One legal producer alleges the constraints on the industry make it hard to produce the fattest diamonds possible in glass jars that might explode — and the streets answered the call. You could quickly spend over a thousand bucks on a small jar filled with diamonds so fat any of them would be appropriate for a prime Liz Taylor engagement ring.

The whipping techniques changed over the years through the BHO eras, but the consistency of today’s batters and frostings (check out our Glob Glossary for the difference) are absolutely fantastic. Refinements in hardware and technique have basically got us to this era we’ve been in for a couple of years it feels safe to say. A kind of who can be the best at the way we all know how to do it, the proprietary little things separating the good from the great if they were using the same material.

One mixed result about the decade was as hash became more accessible as an investment opportunity, sometimes shady players would do in a deal in the same price bracket and that smell astoundingly similar, then a killer sneaks in a deal in the same price bracket and that smell will drive the market make it hard to produce the diamonds which tend to have better bang for their buck since there isn’t a bunch of extra terp sauce leftover.

Meanwhile, he has ideas for more Whisker Bomb in Studio kitchens. “Tasty” is right. Whisker Bomb comes in good afternoons and a good next day. “We could make them with hot sauce — I think the range is nearly unfathomable. It could be picante, it could be pepper sauce — I think the range is nearly unfathomable.”

On the subject of Dexter Holland also has ideas for more Whisker Bomb in Studio kitchens. “Tasty” is right. Whisker Bomb comes in good afternoons and a good next day. “We could make them with hot sauce — I think the range is nearly unfathomable. It could be picante, it could be pepper sauce — I think the range is nearly unfathomable.”

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ZZ TOP MAN BRINGS THE HEAT

Whisker Bomb pepper sauce is more afterburner than eliminator

BY BRETT CALLWOOD

Back in March, we spoke to Offspring frontman Dexter Holland about his new Gringo Bandito hot sauce — a passion project and the result of two years of tinkering before falling on what he described as the “magic recipe.”

But Holland isn’t the only musician on the hot sauce train. Indeed, ZZ Top man and boogie rock veteran Billy Gibbons has joined forces with songwriting pal Tim Montana (of Tim Montana and the Shrednecks) to make their own pepper sauce public. The appropriately named Whisker Bomb came about when they discovered a mutual affinity for making their own sauce in studio kitchens.

“We were in the recording studio scribbling down what we thought was our next best stab at a new song, and during the upcoming break we tiptoed out and I found our mutual endeavors within the recording studio commissary,” Gibbons says. “We were standing at the kitchen sink, and we found that we were both peeling the onions (to use a phrase) on a couple of recipes. I said, ‘What are you creating there?’ And he said, ‘I’m gonna make some hot sauce for later in the afternoon.’ I said, ‘Well that’s what I’m doing.’ Long story longer, we put our heads together and landed on what we thought was a rather tasty concoction.”

“Tasty” is right. Whisker Bomb comes in two varieties: original and a “Have Mercy!” extra hot version. But both are more than pure heat. There’s a smoky tang that rises above the fire. Sure, “Have Mercy!” will kick your butt a little, but not at the expense of the flavor.

“Yeah we like a little attention-getting elements within the recipe, but let’s talk about something that could be used morning, noon and night,” Gibbons says. “I think this is something that goes good with flavor-addicts. There are chili-heads out there who will come to the table with a challenge. But our presentation puts flavor along with heat.”

Once they had their recipe down, they had to figure out a way to mass produce it. Two renowned songwriters don’t really have the time to stand over the sink with a funnel for hours and hours.

“We found a couple of like-minded guys who’s gonna consume the hottest? Who’s going to step over the line? So we pulled back, and our front is, yeah you need to get your butt kicked a little but let’s talk about the flavor.”

The ZZ Top man says that he likes to put half original, half extra hot on his own food. “‘Have Mercy!’ will kick your butt, there’s no doubt about it,” he says. “The original is flavorful, and there may be someone who wants to meet us halfway so that may be the next move. As singers and songwriters, we enjoy the brief break of stepping out of the recording room and you’ve got tortilla chips, scrambled eggs, anything you want, with a little extra sprinkling of some interest into the afternoon break. So this is something very new for us, and at the same time it’s no secret that Billy S. Gibbons from ZZ Top and Tim Montana from Tim Montana and the Shrednecks, we’re known for writing songs are ready to heat it up so why not bolster it with the sauce.”

On the subject of Dexter Holland also having a hot sauce on the shelves, Gibbons says that the interest is inevitable.

“There was a turn of events that pushed ketchup aside and lo and behold, it was the myriad of presentations called hot sauce,” he says. “It could be picante, it could be pepper sauce — I think the range is nearly unfathomable these days.”

Gibbons says that he carries the sauce around with him to give his grub a boost when needed, and he half-jokingly talks up the idea of a leather bandolero for holding it. Meanwhile, he has ideas for more Whisker Bomb products.

“Along with the delivery of hot sauce, there’s also a call for getting into the barbecue realm,” Gibbons says. “You’ve got a powder rub, which is probably just around the corner. Tim and I are still working on songs — that takes most of our time, but why not go into dragging out the grill, putting on the meat with a little spicy Whisker Bomb rub? That’s around the corner.”

Between the music and Whisker Bomb, there’s plenty more to come from Gibbons and Montana then.

“We’re working out of a scant 24 hours,” Gibbons says in conclusion. “The challenge is to stay engaged, make good songs, make good hot sauce, and that’s the recipe for a good afternoon and a good next day.”
COLA 2020 PUTS THE FOCUS ON THE ARTISTS

This year’s fellowship exhibition goes online with a lively video series

BY SHANA NYS DAMBROTT

ormally a mainstay of the culture season and a highlight of the social calendar as well, the annual City of Los Angeles Individual Artist Fellowships (colloquially known as the COLA awards) exhibition at the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery was scheduled for May 21-July 5, and it would have been gorgeous. Due to the pandemic, — LAMAG itself closed — the Department of Cultural Affairs re-imagined both the planned physical exhibition and slate of talks and performances, the key feature of which is an engaging archive of video documentaries visiting the visual artists in their studios while they created the works supported by the grants.

Support grants of $10,000 each were awarded for the creation of new visual, as well as literary, dance and musical, art projects to Tanya Aguiñiga, Amir H. Fallah, YoungEun Kim, Elana Mann, Hillary Mushkin, Alison O’Daniel, Vincent Ramos, Shizu Saldamando, Holly Tempo, Jeffrey Vallance, and Lisa Diane Wedgeworth. The literary and performance-based artists — writer Steven Reigns, dancer Roxanne Steinberg and singer Mia Doi Todd — had the opportunity to appear in livestreamed events during the exhibition’s run. All of those videos are now archived at the website if you’d like to catch up.

In lieu of the consistently ambitious and
impressive gallery installation, LAMAG produced the COLA 2020: Artist Focus video series. Filmed in the months before the May opening, these short but sweet mini-documentaries offer sneak peeks into the work then being made for the fellowship show, along with curator Steven Wong and assistant curator Brianna Bakke interviewing the artists about their practices and what the city and its arts community means to them. All of the films are now available to watch online, and this is such a good idea, as well as a deep, accessible and shareable resource, that we hope they do them from now on.

The projects themselves, as has been noted before, are not curated as a group; which is to say, the artists win the fellowships on individual merit, and the curatorial team figures out how to design the show as these projects progress. Somehow, every year this process nevertheless reveals solid themes in materials and topicality that are as clear as though they were curated with intentional direction. In a sense, what this year’s group all share is an urge to recenter art-making around lived experience.

For their parts, Reigns’ writing is evocative and autobiographical, Steinberg’s dance is rooted in what she calls “embodied knowledge — dancing as a form of knowing,” and Todd’s music has long been known for its seamless stylistic fusion and narrative intrigue. Whether in experiential or narrative approaches, across an eclectic array of mediums, each of the visual artists are also manifesting the power of the personal perspective, challenging systems of oppressive uniformity that thwart social and cultural progress.

For her COLA Fellowship, Tanya Aguiniga continued her social justice work on the U.S./Mexico border, establishing a ceramics studio at Jardín de Mariposas, an LGBTQ shelter in Tijuana. Vincent Ramos’ bricolage of personal archives creates enduring physical monuments to heritage, preserving fleeting traditions and personal memories. Mixed media painter Holly Tempo uses unconventional materials and schematic, expressive architecture-inflected abstractions to document the physical and environmental changes and erasures in her Inglewood neighborhood.

Jeffrey Vallance focuses on recent paintings which subvert conventions of plein air painting by infusing choices of locale and dissonant pastoralism with a subtext of social critique. Hillary Mushkin reconceptualizes landscape drawings using tools of surveillance to create tension between personal relationships to regional localities and the frequently more nefarious elements of government and military land use. Sound artist YoungEun Kim investigates the history of Western tonal standardization as both a literal structure of restraint and a metaphor for the pitfalls of such homogeneity. Elana Mann articulates how she perceives her handmade communal horn sound instrument within the context of protests and activism. Alison O’Daniel also uses sound as a touchstone for interdisciplinary works exploring the experience of navigating the world with compromised hearing.

Painter Lisa Diane Wedgeworth continues and expands her idea-driven abstraction which explores a universe of possible meanings for the color black, in its semantics and associations as well as emotional and spiritual aspects. Painter Amir H. Fallah addresses the surprising degree to which portraiture and personality can be accomplished through seductive color, pattern, pose and personal artifacts in lieu of faces, highlighting common humanity and individual stories at the same time.

Shizu Saldamando also creates portraits, depicting the ordinary people in her life in regally rendered drawings that are intentional in their insistence on community representation in the art world.

For more information, visit the exhibition page: lamag.org/portfolio_page/cola-2020; watch the videos: lamag.org/cola2020-artist-focus-series; and explore the artist pages: cola2020.squarespace.com.
FILM

LONG OVERDUE HONORS

Female rock pioneer Suzi Quatro speaks on getting the trailblazer spotlight in new documentary Suzi Q

BY LINA LECARO

Rock docs these days tend to go one of three ways: 1) Behind the Music-style trajectories tracing the rise of a music act we all know and love; 2) redemptive tales that explore the challenges and struggles of success or lack thereof; 3) spotlights on influential but largely unknown acts that impacted others but never got their due. Suzi Q, the new documentary from Australian filmmaker Liam Firmager about bassist/singer Suzi Quatro is all three of these and it’s a joy to watch whether you’re a fan or not — which is kind of the whole point.

One of the main intentions of the film — available on Video on Demand services starting this Friday — is giving Suzi Quatro the props she deserves. She was a pioneer on record and on stage, inspiring some legendary ladies in rock music. In America, she is best known not for being a musician, but for playing one on TV.

She was already an international hitmaker but it wasn’t until her stint as Leather Tuscadero on Happy Days that she became famous in her own country.

The film starts with some really cool archival footage highlighting her early days growing up in Detroit. As a teen, she was in an all-girl band called The Pleasure Seekers with her sisters, and they gained some local notoriety. But when a producer sought to pluck Quatro from the family group and make her a solo artist, resentments and sore feelings from her siblings and parents made for a hurtful and lonely start to her career. As the artist tells us in a phone interview from her home in the U.K. before the film’s release, being honest about this part of her story was challenging but essential.

“The family stuff was pretty difficult,” she admits. “In a way it gave me that push to go out to prove something, so in a way I have to thank my family, because I was the horse that nobody bet on and I think nobody wanted me to leave. It wasn’t pleasant but I had to do it and it’s important for people to see what I went through and what hurdles I had to overcome and even just being the one out there doing what I did was hard. All the time I was struggling to make it, the thing I kept thinking was I will not compromise myself, I am me and you will never take that away from me.”

Quatro’s tough gal moxie was a big part of her appeal, not to mention her shag haircut and androgynous glamrock style (and yes, she liked leather even before she started playing the character). But it was her skill on the bass that made her standout, especially due to her small stature. Her mastery of the instrument and her ability to croon powerful rock anthems at the same time was special, and it was particularly novel when she started out because few women were doing it.

“I had discovered my ability to entertain, just being able to play at family gatherings and shows,” she recalls. “Very early on I realized I had the capacity to entertain people, I felt it in my bones. I just always knew it was my path in life, and it’s amazing to say, 56 years I’ve been on the road.”

“I did a lot of tours in America but I didn’t have any hit singles there... something was missing,” she continues, echoing a consistent implication in the film. “Like Debbie [Harry] said in the film, maybe I was too early and that’s very possible. I was so off the wall, back then in America there was never a band led by a girl bass player. I don’t think they were ready for me, but they were ready everywhere else.”

In the doc, Blondie’s Harry is joined by L7’s Donita Sparks, The Go-Go’s Kathy Valentine, The Talking Heads’ Tina Weymouth and the ladies who were inspired by her the most — Lita Ford, Cherie Currie and Joan Jett of the Runaways. Of the three, Jett obviously found the biggest success on her own using the blueprint that Quatro (whose posters she had on her wall as a teen) created. As shown in the doc, Jett emulated her image so veraciously, some fans thought “I Love Rock n’ Roll” was a Quatro release when it first came out. It is suggested that had Quatro emerged during the MTV-era, as Jett did, things might have been different in terms of her success in the U.S. and her legacy today. (Joan is in the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, but Suzi is not.) Quatro is gracious about how things ended up, though.

“Everybody started somewhere, and you get your inspirations,” says the star. “I paved the way, but I’m proud of her, ya know. She went out and did her own thing. And I would say she was probably my biggest fan. Nobody can take away the fact that I was the first one and I hold onto that.”

Her videos may not have had a music television platform, but Quatro’s music did a get a lot of exposure via ABC’s Happy Days, on which she performed almost weekly at Arnold’s, the main hangout for the iconic sitcom’s stars including Arthur Fonzerelli (Henry Winkler) and Ritchie Cunningham (Ron Howard). Winkler, along with show creator Gary Marshall, appears in the doc as well, and a case is made for Quatro’s influence on culture even beyond music, her sweet but strong persona providing a marked contrast from the mindless “chicks” who came running every time the Fonz snapped his fingers in earlier seasons.

Though some from the music world thought the show hurt her rock cred at the time, Quatro recognizes the impact her time on Happy Days had on young women, as an audience of future feminists grew up watching her. “I opened the door for women in rock,” says the star matter of factly. “I’ve always been a leather girl too. She was a part of me and [it was] my look, but it was a role. She wasn’t Suzi, but she had elements of me, because if you wanna act you have to put yourself in the part. She was part runaway and part bad girl.”

Post-Happy Days, Quatro did score a hit in the U.S. with the duet “Stumblin’ In,” but none of her insanely catchy, heavier stuff ever broke the charts in the same way. She went on to do musical theater for several years and she has continued to tour even as recently as last year. She’s currently working on a scripted biopic version of her life story (Miley Cyrus and Billie Eilish have been mentioned as potential stars who could play her), but for now Suzi Q sets the record straight in terms of her trailblazer status, providing an engaging look at her life that should satisfy old fans, win over new ones, and hopefully shake up a new generation of women who love rock & roll.

More info on Suzi Q and where to watch at suzieqmovie.com.
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FILM

The Surrogate, Babyteeth, The Truth and more

BY CHUCK WILSON

L.A. Weekly's Movie Guide is your look at the hottest films available on your TV sets, electronic devices and — as coronavirus restrictions continue to change — perhaps in select theaters and drive-ins throughout Southern California. At press time, theaters and multiplexes such as AMC chains indicate that previously planned re-openings in mid-July have been postponed to the end of July. This too, may be adjusted, at least in California, as Governor Gavin Newsom assesses COVID-19 spikes and moves reopenings accordingly.

The good news is that there’s no shortage of diverse and engaging films to see. And as always, we let you know what’s worth the watchtime — from indie art house gems to popcorn-perfect blockbusters to new movies garnering buzz, indicating where you can catch them whether it be digital Video On Demand (VOD) or streaming subscription services.

The Surrogate | VOD

As rich with heady dialogue as a good play, the debut feature from writer-director Jeremy Hersh is sure to inspire provocative post-screening conversation. In a commanding film debut, Jasmine Batchelor stars as Jess, a Brooklyn IT specialist pregnant with a child she’s carrying for her best friend Josh (Chris Perfetti) and his husband, Aaron (Sullivan Jones). When tests reveal that the child will be born with Down syndrome, Jess struggles to respond optimistically, even as Josh, Aaron and Jess’ own parents are consumed by doubt.

It’s in Jess’ nature to put the concerns of others first, but gradually, she comes to see that the choice here isn’t just Jess and Aaron’s to make.

A movie where every scene could easily come with a topic sentence title card — Eugenics, Reproductive Rights, Race, Gender — The Surrogate remains grounded in the personal, which seems something of a miracle given its intensity of subject. At any moment, someone could say the wrong thing, and the fear of that makes this a movie with the built-in tension of a thriller. If the resolution feels a bit abrupt, dramatically, the end-title sequence that follows is so lovely and so right that you’re not likely to mind a bit.

Babyteeth | Amazon Prime

Milla (Eliza Scanlen) is 16 when 23-year-old Moses (Toby Wallace) bumps into her on a Sydney, Australia metro platform. In a blink, she’s brought him home and into her life. Tatted, raggedy and irresistible, Moses is a junkie who nonetheless proves to be a kindred spirit for Milla, an insular suburban girl navigating a terminal illness and well-meaning parents (Ben Mendelsohn and Essie Davis) trying to pretend that all will be well.

It’s one of the many virtues of director Shannon Murphy’s accomplished debut film, adapted from screenwriter Rita Kalnejais’ play, that the particulars of Milli’s disease are not relevant. In this view, she’s not dying; she’s coming into her own, and Moses, who may or may not return the romantic feelings Milla is developing for him, is helping her get there.

Babyteeth has a fine cast and memorable scenes — a classmate thoughtlessly asking to try on Milli’s wig; a mother watching her child dancing with abandon; a father realizing that his daughter is asking for a favor for after she’s gone from this world. But the film is also a bit overstuffed, as if the filmmakers loved the characters (and actors) too much to cut them as mercilessly as they should. For me, the too-much-ness of Babyteeth undercuts the poignancy of the film’s ending but most folks find it wrenching. I envy them the feeling.

Ella: Just One of Those Things | VOD

She was a wonder from the very beginning. At age 16, a girl named Ella Jane Fitzgerald entered an amateur night contest at the Apollo Theater in Harlem. She was planning to dance but so intimidated by the performance of the dancing Edwards Sisters that she opted to sing instead. The crowd was restless, and at first, as dancer Norma Miller recalls in the stodgy but effective new documentary, Ella: Just One of Those Things, they booed. But then, Fitzgerald’s voice took hold. “She shut us up so quick,” Miller says. “You could hear a rat piss on cotton.”

A star had been born, although big time fame was still a few years away. Veteran British filmmaker Leslie Woodhead tracks Fitzgerald’s brilliant career beat by beat in a film that could have used more of Ella singing, especially in its first half, and perhaps a little less testimony from colleagues and scholars. There is history aplenty, including fascinating archival photos of the Harlem Renaissance, as well as remembrances of the difficulties Fitzgerald faced — even after she’d become “The First Lady of Song” — in a racist, segregated America.

In the home stretch, Woodhead finally lets Fitzgerald cut loose, most thrillingly from her past sins to light. But Lumir may be wrong about a few details of that past, which means in turn, that she’s wrong about herself, too.

One of the world’s great filmmakers, Kore-eda is also among its gentlest. The Truth always feels true to the every day, even though it’s a story about show folk. The screenplay is quotably acerbic but also steeped in melancholy, as is his way. But here, in France, with the great Deneuve before him, the director seems lighter of foot, more playful. Kore-eda reportedly communicated to his cast through an interpreter but you’d never know it. Filmmaker and cast appear have been united, if not by language, then by joy.

Welcome to Chechnya | HBO

In 2017, the Putin-sponsored Chechnyan government, led by right-wing strongman Ramzan Kadyrov, began arresting, torturing and killing gay, lesbian and transgender people, while also encouraging their family members to do the same. In his riveting and disturbing new film, journalist-turned-filmmaker David France (the magnificent How to Survive a Plague) embeds with the Russian LGBTQ Network, a small, incredibly brave group that took it upon themselves to smuggle queer Chechnyans out of the country.

France begins with Anya, a 21-year-old Muslim lesbian whose uncle has threatened to reveal her truth to her father — who will surely kill her — unless she sleeps with him. Sneaking Anya away to a safe location, in a three-hour window of opportunity, becomes a high-tension escape.

There’s also Grisha, who is willing to become the first victim to go public with his story of torture but only if he and his entire family, including his mother, sister and her children, can first be moved to safety. In a safe house, we come to know other victims, including one who’ll try to kill himself just as he’s about to be transported to Canada and a new life, an act of desperation that suggests that there is no such thing as freedom after you’ve been tortured for being you are. This is vital, essential filmmaking.
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BREAKING THROUGH THE FUNK

Death Valley Girls look toward next album after releasing Breakthrough EP

BY BRETT CALLWOOD

The wonderfully named Bonnie Bloomgarden, singer and multi-instrumentalist with Los Angeles psych-rockers Death Valley Girls, is a captivating conversationalist. Her passion and enthusiasm for her band is wildly infectious, even under current conditions. And lord, she has every right to be psyched (pun intended). Death Valley Girls’ third full-length album, 2018’s Darkness Rains, saw the group dial up the Sabbath-meets-Stooges-meets-early-2Z-Top psychedelic stoner sludge, and make new friends on the process.

Their first new offering since then is the Breakthrough EP — two covers that perfectly highlight where the band is at in 2020. The title track is an old Atomic Rooster tune, though it was a previous cover by Nigerian band the Funkees that attracted Bloomgarden and her bandmates to the song. Further inspiration, though, came from an unlikely source. “We were on tour this one time, we were listening to this Nigerian ‘70s rock & roll compilation, and this song came on and we thought it was really cool,” she says. “At the same time, we were also listening to this book by Damien Echols who was wrongfully convicted of murder. We were listening to his book and it was amazing to us, the idea that somebody learned how to astral project, learned how to survive and thrive in the worst of conditions. I thought that was so cool, and we were listening to the song at the same time. It just seemed like that song and that concept, what we learned from him, really stuck with us so we wanted to record it for him.”

Echols, if you remember, was one of the West Memphis Three — convicted in 1994 for the horrific and ritualistic murder of three young children named Steve Branch, James Moore and Christopher Byers. Investigations were going nowhere, so the murders were pinned on Echols, Jason Baldwin and Jessie Misskelley for seemingly no other reason than they were black, listened to metal and read Stephen King.

“It was like the beginning of Satanic panic,” says Bloomgarden. “The whole system is so messed up, people don’t even realize that even if they find the guy that did it, or girl, you don’t just automatically leave prison. That was a really interesting part of the story too. They would rather pay money to keep you in so that they don’t look bad. So it’s such a bad system, but it’s such an amazing story and it reminds you that your mind is everything. It’s the opportunity. You can do anything inside your mind. And also, when this is coming out, during this time, it seems like a good time to return to your mind and remember you have so much power.”

That is an important message right now, at a time when we’re all cooped up but starting to think about the transition back to something resembling normality. Temptation reigns, and mistakes will be made. We need to stay sensible. While “Breakthrough” is an old song written by somebody else, and even though the Death Valley Girls recorded it before the lockdown, the lyrics ring eerily true.

“It’s weird because it makes so much sense,” says Bloomgarden. “But that happens a lot with us — we don’t realize what’s happening until, sometimes until someone makes a video and we go, ‘Oh that’s what that song means — cool.’ But yeah, I can’t remember exactly when we did it, I actually have no concept of time at all, but it seems really, really, really long ago.”

The frontwoman says that this EP will serve as the perfect bridge between Darkness Rains and their next full project. “We’ve been getting really into the idea of singing together and singing with as many people as possible, and then also making records for people to sing to,” she says. “On ‘Breakthrough,’ we had 10 friends come and sing. So yeah, it’s just the idea that there’s power in singing and it also feels really good. I think we’re copying other religions or something. It’s a cover song [there’s also a cover of Daniel Johnson’s ‘Rock & Roll’ on the EP], so there’s something in it that attracted us to it. We’ve done one cover before but we don’t usually do it so there’s something that made us want to do this. People will find their own thing that they’re pulled to and want to sing along to.”

Bloomgarden says that, like everything else they’ve put out, the EP was recorded at Station House Studio in Echo Park. Darkness, the studio dog belonging to engineer Mark Rains, was their guiding animal (hence the previous album being named Darkness Rains). Business as usual then. In fact, Bloomgarden says that the lockdown barely affected the rollout at all. “It had an effect in the way that what was important shifted for everyone in the world,” she says. “But it kinda felt like this song made sense, particularly at the time. It’s a song you’re supposed to sing to, just talking about breaking free and breaking through in your mind. You can free wherever you are. It’s so scary, even though it’s hard to keep the fear up. But this is totally scary, these times. There’s always music to make it a little less scary or to escape to.”

In an attempt to stay sane, Bloomgarden says that she has spent much of the past three months inside of her own head, thinking. “That sounds funny and weird, but we are usually on tour and we knew that we were going to have the longest break we’ve ever had which is supposed to be four months, from December to March,” she says. “That was going to be our break and we were going to record in there. So we knew we were already going to have to stay at home for our months and figure out how to be productive members of society because usually we work for months and then we cocoon for months. You can’t cocoon for four months — that’s not good for anybody. So we already had been working on how to be here. Then when this all happened, it seemed like the whole world had to work out how to be here. It seemed like a great opportunity to just think and consider stuff.”

Whether they retained sanity or not, there will be new music released over the coming weeks and months, and Bloomgarden will try to figure out how to take the music to the people. “In this time, you have to think ‘what is the live experience? What do people need from that? Is it possible to do it any other way?’ she says. “We’ll hopefully get to play live, but I think things are going to be slow and things are going to change. Hopefully they’re all gonna change for the better. It’s a great opportunity change, to fix things that weren’t working, including in our rock & roll music industry.”

Death Valley Girls’ Breakthrough is out now through Suicide Squeeze Records.
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