

RESOURCES FOR ARTISTS • JESSE EISENBERG TALKS HIS LATEST FILMS • BEWARE OF CBD SCAMMERS

LAW WEEKLY

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RACHEL LEVIN

YOUTUBE BEAUTY INFLUENCER MAKES THE TRANSITION TO POP STAR

BY BRETT CALLWOOD

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BRING THE BAR TO YOU

Where to get your fix of liquid comfort during lockdown

BY TARA FINLEY



PHOTO BY LOUIS HANSEL @SHOTSOFLOUIS ON UNSPLASH

As Bob Dylan once warned us, the times they are a-changin'. In the wake of devastating COVID-19 closures, the hospitality industry is doing everything they can to adapt and stay afloat. Following Governor Gavin Newsom's emergency declarations, the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control has temporarily allowed the sale of alcoholic beverages to-go. As such, we've seen a surge of never-before-seen offers that bring spirited relief right to your door. From hard kombucha to cocktails, you'll find everything you need and more below:

HomeState

Adapting to the times, L.A. favorite HomeState has a new general store, offering ready-to-eat and pantry items alongside that quarantine staple: booze. While their Playa Vista location had to temporarily close due to coronavirus restrictions, their Hollywood and Highland Park locations are ready to serve. Highland Park is offering their full menu with the addition of margaritas, beer and wine to-go. Their Hollywood location is home to the General Store, and while they are still serving a limited menu, Angelenos should take advantage of other offerings like whole eggs, dry beans, flour, coffee, toilet paper and, of course, margaritas, beer and wine. Order for curbside pick-up or free delivery via their app.

Héritage Fine Wines

Héritage Beverly Hills' brick-and-mortar location may be closed due to the COVID-19 crisis, but they're still delivering delicious vintages right to your door. You can order via Postmates from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., or you can email beloved resident sommelier Charles Denois at charles@heritagebeverlyhills.com and he'll deliver you a bottle himself. As they say, may we never run out of wine.

SocialEats

If you live in Santa Monica you're in luck:

SocialEats is offering free local delivery with every \$10 minimum order. Choose from — or combine orders from — any of the eight restaurants located inside SocialEats and The Gallery Food Hall for a smorgasbord feast. Delivery includes alcohol, so be sure to take advantage of their \$4 beers and 50 percent off wine with promo code 50%WINE.

Jar

Jar is making everyone's stay-at-home order a little easier by offering cocktail kits and booze to-go. Available for pick-up, curbside takeaway and free delivery within 10 miles of their 8225 Beverly Blvd. location, you can quench your thirst with one of their three kits: margarita, Serengeti and Jar's Naughty Martini. Only want a bottle? Grab some vodka, whiskey or/and tequila along with a boxed dinner and hunker down to binge more Netflix.

Bev

Need a drink? Just text Bev! This Text For Delivery service is easy to use and fast to deliver — just text your order to (323) 289-6964 and get your drinks delivered to your doorstep within two hours. A female-first beverage brand, Bev brings delicious canned wines straight to you. We're obsessed with their California blend rosé with its summer-y notes of white peach and watermelon reminding us of warm days in the sun. Hate hangovers? Every serving of Bev has 11.9 percent ABV yet zero grams of sugar, helping you to avoid the headaches caused by sugary drinks.

Carbon Beach Club

Carbon Beach Club is one of the few restaurants in Malibu still offering takeout. The eatery is now serving a locally-sourced, fresh menu curbside — including beer, wine and cocktails. From an impressive wine list to craft cocktails, you can order a Bacon Apple Manhattan or Clear and Dirty Martini of your very own to enjoy on the couch at your leisure. Orders are accepted by calling (310) 651-7777, available

daily between 11 a.m. and 9 p.m.

JuneShine

Do something for your spirit and your health and order JuneShine 6 percent ABV hard kombucha straight to your door. This alcoholic kombucha beverage is a better-for-you drink — organic, gluten-free, probiotic, non-GMO, with antioxidants and vitamins — that's perfect for a virtual happy hour with friends or by yourself while dreaming of all the adventures you'll have when this quarantine is over. Available in 12-packs and 24-packs, we've been sipping on their sampler 24-pack because we like trying all the flavors! Shipping is \$4.99 with next-day delivery, or free with a subscription. Looking to save a little money? Use the discount code "Drink_For_Tomorrow" at checkout for 30 percent off your first subscription order. Even better? They're donating a dollar from every order to the U.S. Bartenders Guild Emergency Assistance Program to help the service workers that have found themselves unemployed due to coronavirus closures.

Éléphante

Now with pickup and delivery, Santa Monica's Éléphante is offering an all day menu, cocktails, beer, wine and family-style grocery along with produce boxes to all those who order. Available through Caviar (remember: free first delivery), we will never say no to their burrata pizza and a bottle of AMASS Botanics Dry Gin. Also worth noting is their delivery offering of Old Fashioned x 4.

Same Same Thai

Silver Lake Thai food staple Same Same is offering 10 percent off your entire takeout order when you call (213) 273-842 to place an order. For those of us looking for a drink, the restaurant is also offering 20 percent off bottles of wine to those ordering for pick-up. While delivery is also available through GrubHub, Uber Eats, Caviar and Postmates, the restaurant prefers you order through them, thus all the discounts. Bottles of wine start at just \$21.

Madre

Thanks to California's new regulations, Madre in Torrance and Palms is offering alcohol delivery and takeout with a purchase of food. We can't wait to get our hands on their \$15 beer kit with michelada mix that serves six or you know, just one. You and your "roommates" can also get margaritas, palomas, a 6-pack of beer for \$12 and wine. Throw in their \$25 taco kit and you've got a party. You can order pick-up at Palms location by calling (310) 559-4732 and at Torrance by calling (310) 974-8005, delivery is available at both locations through ChowNow, Grubhub, DoorDash, Postmates, Caviar, Delivery.com and UberEats.

La Cabaña Restaurant

Want to support the Los Angeles restaurant industry but having a hard time staying in budget? La Cabaña is offering free delivery

through Uber Eats to help lessen the financial impact of your household. By offering their famous house margaritas (oh the stories we could tell about these margs), beer and wine to-go, there has never been a better time than now to take them up on their offer. Hunker down with some Albondigas and a giant margarita and ride this isolation through.

Severance Wine Bar

Available on caviar, Severance Wine Bar is serving up all your favorite bottles — white, red, sparkling, you name it — alongside the charcuterie boards and accouterments of your dreams. Grab a baguette sandwich, one of their daily wine deals and head over to a window to pretend you're having the spring picnic of a lifetime. Your first delivery is free, so there's really no excuse to not bring this kind of breezy joy into your life.

The Semi Tropic

Craving something special? Tired of having to pick cocktails off a pre-made menu? As much as we love beer and wine, times like these definitely necessitate a fun bar, which is why we're recommending The Semi Tropic for their full bar menu delivery and pickup. From bottles to cocktails, pick your favorite and get ready to enjoy it from the comfort (and safety) of your own home.

BG Beverly Hills

Another budget-friendly option, BG Beverly Hills is giving customers 50 percent off wine and pre-batched cocktail jars to-go via take-out. If you join their loyalty program you'll earn points toward a gift card for every \$100 you spend. Go big and get yourself their Filetto di Manzo — an 8 oz. prime filet mignon with brown butter sage sauce — with a Tahitian vanilla panna cotta to finish and a 32 oz. Vesper Martini with AMASS Gin, Tito's Vodka, Italicut Bergamot and Lillet Blanc to wash it all down.

The Raymond 1886

Pasadena's favorite Craftsman Cottage is offering a 10 percent discount on all curbside pickup orders when you call the restaurant directly at (626) 441-3136. Also available via delivery through GrubHub, DoorDash and Postmates, you can score wine, beer and pre-made cocktails from their menu. Their hand-crafted cocktails to go come in servings of four, created by the 1886 Bar Team and served in reusable Mason Jars.

Pretty Dirty

Located inside the 5 Line Tavern in Eagle Rock, Pretty Dirty is known for their rotating menu of signature cocktails. Changing to accommodate these weird times we are in, they're now serving these cocktails to-go, ordered online and enjoyed through contact-less pick up between the hours of 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. Options include their Manhattan, negroni, margarita and daiquiri.

PANDEMIC BRINGS OUT SCAMMERS

Experts warn of dangerous COVID-19 CBD claims

BY JIMI DEVINE



There will always be those looking to take advantage of dark times, and the people pushing their cannabis products as a COVID-19 cure or reliever definitely fall into that category.

Over the past couple of weeks, the nation's oldest cannabis reform organization NORML has twice warned consumers about shady companies looking to take advantage of the crisis currently unfolding across the globe. Los Angeles County Public Health officials announced there are now 3,011 cases of COVID-19 in L.A., and the death toll has risen to 54 as of Tuesday afternoon.

NORML first warned consumers about scammers last week. In an email going over organizational efforts to continue advocacy through telecommuting and best practices for consumers, executive director Erik Altieri noted: "We also encourage everyone to remain vigilant of online misinformation (like any claims cannabis or CBD can help cure or protect against this virus) and to beware of potential scammers promoting similar claims."

But this would not prove enough. Unfortunately, after multiple reports of frauds at the intersection of cannabis and coronavirus,

NORML had to speak more directly to the issue a week later.

NORML told its membership in an email some predatory marketers are seeking to profit by selling coronavirus-inspired snake oil products based on unsubstantiated claims and that some of those trash heaps are explicitly targeting cannabis consumers.

"If something sounds too good to be true, it likely is. During these difficult times, we encourage people to be skeptical of any unsubstantiated claims, particularly those circulating online, surrounding the use of cannabis or any other uncorroborated treatment for COVID-19," Altieri wrote.

We asked Altieri if it seemed like a growing problem over the last week causing NORML's follow-up email on the subject.

"It should be of no surprise that similar folks who had no qualms with taking advantage of patients and other concerned individuals during good times, have no problem doing so during a health crisis," Altieri told *L.A. Weekly* in an email.

Altieri admits it is hard to quantify if there is a higher volume of scams related to CBD and cannabis occurring during the COVID-19 pandemic than before, but it would seem obvious

that it is even crueler now.

"People are nervous about the state of the world and their own health, combined with social distancing and isolation, they are now more than ever seeking out answers or products that give them a sense of control and safety," he said, "Unfortunately, answering this call for knowledge is an army of snake oil salesmen who lack any real moral center and are putting their 'customers' and the general public at great risk with their false promises and bogus products."

Altieri recommends for all Americans to be skeptical of all health claims from un reputable sources and stick to getting advice from agencies like the CDC or their own health care professionals.

NBC KGW8 in Portland called the Oregon Attorney General's office about advertising claims around CBD and coronavirus. The AG's office was quick to jump on the claims as a violation of a "substantiation rule," set to go into effect in early April that requires scientific evidence to support promotional health claims

"We were very pleased that the store was willing to remove their sandwich board sign when our investigator explained that it could be in violation of Oregon law," Kristina Edmundson of the AG's office told KGW8. "Unfortunately, the message is simple: There are no known cures for COVID-19. Please don't try to sell something that suggests there are!"

The store noted to KGW8 their heart is in the right place and "we want to help people as much as we can."

The wellness enthusiasts at HerbalAmy.com were hit with a notice from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Federal Trade Commission for improperly marketing a COVID-19 prevention package. The letter was a notice to owner Amy Weidner they had reviewed claims she made about products on her website and social media in February.

"The FDA has determined that your website offers 'Coronavirus Protocol' products (Coronavirus Boneset Tea, Coronavirus Cell Protection, Coronavirus Core tincture, Coronavirus Immune System and Elderberry Tincture) for sale in the United States and that these products are intended to mitigate, prevent, treat, diagnose or cure COVID-19 in people. FDA has determined that these products are unapproved new drugs sold in violation of section 505(a) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FD&C Act), 21 U.S.C. § 355(a)," the notice from the Feds read.

Owner Amy Weidner issued a statement explaining the incident from her perspective.

"FDA is very stringent on the wording we can use to describe our herbal products. We quoted a description from the inventor of this particular herbal combinations from Stephen Buhner. He is considered one of the leading experts in herbal products and developed this formula called Coronavirus Protocol. The letter we received from the FDA was simply an administrative warning that we cannot make any claims concerning herbal products. We

removed the passage containing Mr Buhners description of the products and are in order to be in compliance with all FDA requirements. The quality of the product was never in doubt and we continue to service clients nationwide," Weidner wrote on her blog. The Expert

Michael Backes, the author of *Cannabis Pharmacy: The Practical Guide to Medical Marijuana* and one of the top cannabis pharmacology minds in general, weighed in about the FDA getting involved and the actual impact of cannabis on the immune system.

"The FDA has sent a lot of warning letters in relation to CBD," Backes told *L.A. Weekly*.

He went on to note the nutraceutical industry runs into similar problems all the time around health claims. "So the nutraceutical industry, what they do is they don't make medical claims. They make what is called structure and function claims."

That means they can't say chamomile tea cures insomnia but can say it promotes restful sleep.

"These guys got in trouble because they were making a medical claim about impacting, mitigating or curing COVID-19," Backes said of the HerbalAmy.com letter. "The FDA hates that and the FDA has gotten really good at monitoring the internet for claims on these products."

Backes said these things are the last kind of thing you want to see from the FDA saying, "they will show up and shut you down no problem." And they don't make the distinction between well-intentioned hippies spreading their cures and the real charlatans.

"There are people making these claims bases on a real desire to help people and there are people making these claims to make a quick buck," Backes said. "I don't mind if they go after some people because there is a lot of quack crap out there when it comes to the effectiveness of CBD because the truth is not a lot of people bother to learn or figure out how CBD really works."

Backes noted giving your cannabinoid receptors a break for a few days can really help give your immune system a little boost because smoking cannabis slows down your first line of defense against viruses.

"When your body gets a virus, the first thing it does is introduce interferons locally. The problem with people smoking cannabis is that they slow that response down because THC is mildly immunosuppressive," Backes said. "So you have to be a little careful with it, you don't want to be taking big fat dabs all day and expect your lungs to respond like the lungs of someone who wasn't taking big fat dabs all day."

Backes says most of your brain's receptors completely rebuild in about 28 days, except for in the hippocampus, which plays a big part in learning and memory.

"That can take up to six months. But the interesting thing is if you take a little CBD tincture every day, people whose hair tested positive for both THC and CBD didn't have those changes in the hippocampus," Backes said. "It looks like CBD kind of works like a safety belt for protecting the hippocampus from those changes."

HELPING HANDS

From calls for new art to grant relief for artists

BY SHANA NYS DAMBROT



Everyone wants to help, however they can — and people from the arts community are no different. As baffling as it is to hear some in power wonder about the value of the arts in crisis times — before starting their latest Netflix binge, good book, virtual museum tour or crafts-based educational lesson plan, of course — we all know better. We would argue that the arts are more, not less, essential at a moment like this than ever. Light in dark times, the arts not only keep us sane, connected and human, they are also uniquely ready to express and encapsulate this time in our culture through empathy, beauty, poetry, humor and unflinching honesty.

At the same time, artists are among the most precariously funded workers in America, and many are being hit harder and sooner than our other neighbors. With this mind, we'll publish regular updates on new information regarding resources and relief grants being made available to artists and writers, as well as what is shaping

up to be a spate of topical calls for art and writing specifically dealing with COVID-19 life experiences. From the DCA to indie galleries and the L.A. Press Club, there's some stuff in here that might help.

DCA's **arts emergency fund for performing artists and ensembles in dance, music and theater** is aimed at artists and small arts groups who had planned public events canceled due to social distancing and Safer at Home orders. This emergency relief grant is open to performing artists and small ensembles in dance, music, and theater. It works by reallocating funding through a micro-granting process for artists to recoup a portion of lost wages/revenue. Solo artists can request up to \$400 and ensembles up to \$1,200. Funding in this first round is focused on artists and groups who were headlining an entire event (neither a festival nor a private thing, it had to be singular and public), scheduled for between March 16 and May 16. Submission deadline: Friday, May 1. culturela.org/grants-and-calls/aer-fund.

The Women's Center for Creative Work is offering \$1,000 emergency relief grants for artists, with rolling deadlines starting now. womenscenterforcreativework.com/eh-grant. California Humanities has put together a list culled from their grassroots network, being regularly updated at calhum.org/covid-19-resources. Bookmark it and check back or sign up for their emails.

The Kinkade Family Foundation Emergency Grant for Curators is to support developing curatorial projects that "shed light on the world

in the Time of the Coronavirus Award. A call has been issued for work in writing, video, podcast or photo essay directly related to your current experience with the COVID-19 new normal. Entries must not have been previously published anywhere — social media doesn't count as publishing — and there is no entry fee. The deadline to apply is May 1, with the winners announced in late May and published on the L.A. Press Club website. Prizes in each category range from \$100-\$1,000 and there is a special student category. lapressclub.wufoo.com.

SOVO// Magazine's **Department of Social Distancing**: An interactive online art installation archiving the thoughts and feelings of the public during this fraught time. They are now accepting voicemail submissions, "general observations, existential crisis reports and any random thoughts you would like to share with our staff. We take these reports seriously and listen to every single transmission with the utmost diligence." Recognizing that the COVID-19 virus and quarantine has generated a parallel epidemic of existential musing, and also insomnia, the answering machine is here for you 24/7. Just call (805) 334-5286 and leave a message. The Department of Social Distancing website archives these and other materials which are mostly pretty hilarious but which also includes real-time CDC-based news and updates, and surprises in the "Not Porn" folder. departmentofsocialdistancing.com.

Lucie Foundation **Social Media Photography Call**. "Photography can inspire, shed light and give a moment of reflection during this time of social distancing due to COVID-19," writes the Lucie Foundation, and they are using social media to bring everyone into the conversation. All are invited to share images and stories by tagging @LucieFoundation and using the hashtag #LucieCovidPhotos.

Visitor Welcome Center's **emi kuriyama Spirit Award** is dedicated to the memory of luminous talent emi kuriyama's (1991-2016) whose writing explored themes of transformation, collaboration and empathy. It offers two unrestricted grants of \$2,000 each to one writer and one artist who find themselves in a "transitional moment in their life or work," and is "open and expansive to multiple possibilities, such as, but not limited to, bodily transitions (e.g., aging, genders, pregnancy, health), geographic transitions (e.g., a cross-country move, displacement, im/migrations), spiritual transitions, and/or a transitional shift in a creative practice."

At this critical time, the Spirit Award fund is further staging an **Emergency Relief Lottery** awarding two \$500 emergency relief awards to individual artists and writers whose creative practices and incomes have been impacted by COVID-19. The two recipients will be determined by a lottery, with the application closing on April 6, and recipients notified shortly thereafter. emikuriyamaspirtaward.org/covid19relieflottery.

during this time of darkness." The program will provide one-time grants of up to \$5,000 for unexpected emergencies related to the COVID-19 pandemic. kinkadefamilyfoundation.org/emergencygrantforcurators.

As it happens, the L.A. Press Club is running one of each — a contest and a new grant program, announcing the establishment of an **Emergency Fund for Southern California Journalists**. Made possible through a grant from the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, the fund is now open for applications, in recognition of "the hardship put on journalists through the coronavirus pandemic and/or the changing media landscape." Applicants do not need to be members of the Los Angeles Press Club nor HFPA but do need to reside in Southern California. The application form is available on the Press Club website and distribution of funds will start in April. The Press Club plans to make this a permanent emergency fund. lapressclub.wufoo.com.

The Press Club also announced the new Life

Important Facts About DOVATO

This is only a brief summary of important information about DOVATO and does not replace talking to your healthcare provider about your condition and treatment.

What is the Most Important Information I Should Know about DOVATO?

If you have both human immunodeficiency virus-1 (HIV-1) and hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection, DOVATO can cause serious side effects, including:

- **Resistant HBV infection.** Your healthcare provider will test you for HBV infection before you start treatment with DOVATO. If you have HIV-1 and hepatitis B, the hepatitis B virus can change (mutate) during your treatment with DOVATO and become harder to treat (resistant). It is not known if DOVATO is safe and effective in people who have HIV-1 and HBV infection.
- **Worsening of HBV infection.** If you have HIV-1 and HBV infection, your HBV may get worse (flare-up) if you stop taking DOVATO. A “flare-up” is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before. Worsening liver disease can be serious and may lead to death.
 - Do not run out of DOVATO. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your DOVATO is all gone.
 - **Do not stop DOVATO without first talking to your healthcare provider.** If you stop taking DOVATO, your healthcare provider will need to check your health often and do blood tests regularly for several months to check your liver.

What is DOVATO?

DOVATO is a prescription medicine that is used without other antiretroviral medicines to treat HIV-1 infection in adults who have not received antiretroviral medicines in the past, **and** without known resistance to the medicines dolutegravir or lamivudine. HIV-1 is the virus that causes Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). It is not known if DOVATO is safe and effective in children.

Who should not take DOVATO?

Do Not Take DOVATO if You:

- have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine that contains dolutegravir or lamivudine.
- take dofetilide.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before using DOVATO?

Tell your healthcare provider about all of your medical conditions, including if you:

- have or have had liver problems, including hepatitis B or C infection.
- have kidney problems.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. One of the medicines in DOVATO (dolutegravir) may harm your unborn baby.
 - Your healthcare provider may prescribe a different medicine than DOVATO if you are planning to become pregnant or if pregnancy is confirmed in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.
 - If you can become pregnant, your healthcare provider will perform a pregnancy test before you start treatment with DOVATO.
 - If you can become pregnant, you should consistently use effective birth control (contraception) during treatment with DOVATO.
 - Tell your healthcare provider right away if you are planning to become pregnant, you become pregnant, or think you may be pregnant during treatment with DOVATO.

Tell your healthcare provider about all of your medical conditions, including if you: (cont'd)

- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. **Do not breastfeed if you take DOVATO.**
 - You should not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.
 - One of the medicines in DOVATO (lamivudine) passes into your breastmilk.
 - Talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

Some medicines interact with DOVATO. Keep a list of your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

- You can ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for a list of medicines that interact with DOVATO.
- **Do not start taking a new medicine without telling your healthcare provider.** Your healthcare provider can tell you if it is safe to take DOVATO with other medicines.

What are Possible Side Effects of DOVATO?

DOVATO can cause serious side effects, including:

- **Those in the “What is the Most Important Information I Should Know about DOVATO?” section.**
- **Allergic reactions. Call your healthcare provider right away if you develop a rash with DOVATO. Stop taking DOVATO and get medical help right away if you develop a rash with any of the following signs or symptoms:** fever; generally ill feeling; tiredness; muscle or joint aches; blisters or sores in mouth; blisters or peeling of the skin; redness or swelling of the eyes; swelling of the mouth, face, lips, or tongue; problems breathing.
- **Liver problems.** People with a history of hepatitis B or C virus may have an increased risk of developing new or worsening changes in certain liver tests during treatment with DOVATO. Liver problems, including liver failure, have also happened in people without a history of liver disease or other risk factors. Your healthcare provider may do blood tests to check your liver.

Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following signs or symptoms of liver problems: your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice); dark or “tea-colored” urine; light-colored stools (bowel movements); nausea or vomiting; loss of appetite; and/or pain, aching, or tenderness on the right side of your stomach area.

- **Too much lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis).** Lactic acidosis is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. **Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms that could be signs of lactic acidosis:** feel very weak or tired; unusual (not normal) muscle pain; trouble breathing; stomach pain with nausea and vomiting; feel cold, especially in your arms and legs; feel dizzy or lightheaded; and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
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- **The most common side effects of DOVATO include:** headache; diarrhea; nausea; trouble sleeping; and tiredness.

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Where Can I Find More Information?

- Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist.
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FILM

MIMES, ZOMBIES AND HOMEBOUND FEVER DREAMS

Jesse Eisenberg talks preparing for his latest two movies, *Vivarium* and *Resistance*

BY LINA LECARO



Jesse Eisenberg in *Vivarium*

From his breakout role in the compelling divorce drama *The Squid and the Whale* to his charismatic turn as an enterprising illusionist in *Now You See Me* to his Academy Award-nominated role as Mark Zuckerberg in *The Social Network*, Jesse Eisenberg has proven to be one of Hollywood's most versatile young actors. His two new features follow what might be one of his more fun, perhaps less challenging roles — in the horror comedy blockbuster sequel

Zombieland: Double Tap — but both are just as entertaining, and they see Eisenberg stretching himself in new ways.

While many major movies have seen their releases delayed, just as many have forgone theater runs altogether, going straight to video on demand at a time when we all really need them. Eisenberg's latest should top your list of must-sees.

In the *Black Mirror*-esque psychological sci-fi film *Vivarium*, he plays a husband and

young home buyer who gets trapped inside of a strange model home and its surrounding community. The dark alternate universe is one he and his wife cannot escape, and yes, the premise might hit a little too close to home (pun intended) right now, but it is none the less an intriguing watch thanks to the lead performances. In *Resistance*, he plays the legendary mime Marcel Marceau, who was revered as a performer but was also a World War II hero — the Holocaust survivor helped save hundreds of Jewish children orphaned by the Nazis.

Eisenberg, who was in L.A. with his wife and child when the coronavirus restrictions were implemented, but has since returned to his home in the Midwest, answered a few questions for *L.A. Weekly* about his current video on demand theatrical double tap.

L.A. WEEKLY: *First of all, how are you coping with the home quarantine situation? What are you doing to keep busy and inspired?*

JESSE EISENBERG: My family and I are self-isolating in an RV as we make our way back to our home in Indiana. We are going there to help out the domestic violence shelter my mother-in-law ran, which is experiencing a shortage of volunteers and resources.

was just so artfully done. I also loved that it was abstract in the way great surrealist movies are abstract — they use symbols to evoke feelings rather than literal messages. It kind of seemed like the *Black Mirror* episode that Man Ray or Luis Bunuel would have directed.

What's your take on your character in *Vivarium*? Is he an everyman or something more psychologically questionable?

I feel like you balance both with that role. My character begins as a man who loves nature, loves getting his hands dirty — he's a tree surgeon for a living. But when he moves to Yonder, this hellscape of a suburb, the life starts to drain out of him and he turns into this horrible, angry, brooding guy. He grows into a terrible father and husband and all of his worst impulses manifest in dangerous ways.

And in regard to *Resistance*.... Wow. There is such a mystique surrounding mimes. Were you apprehensive about playing this role?

I grew up as the son of a birthday party clown. My mother painted her face like Marcel Marceau and performed for children at birthday parties, in schools and hospitals so this kind of work with children was very familiar to me. I also lost family in southern Poland during the war, very close to Marceau's family. This movie is about the most famous mime, but it's not a movie about mime — it's an amazing story of an artist who becomes a reluctant hero under the most extreme circumstances.

Marcel Marceau was such a talented, fascinating character. What did you bring to this characterization and what were the challenges there?

My main challenge with this movie, obviously, was learning mime. I didn't have to be as good as Marceau in his prime, but I had to be 1,000 times better than I initially was. I studied for about six months with this amazing choreographer, Lorin Eric Salm, who studied with Marceau in Paris and has become a chronicler of his life. It was an amazing experience, learning about the history of mime while learning to perform.

Since you're best known for playing Mark Zuckerberg you obviously aren't afraid to tackle playing real people. But does it make it harder or easier than playing a fictional character?

Playing real people has some wonderful advantages. There's usually a trove of information, videos, recordings, etc. But in the kind of movies I've done, there is less an expectation of an exact impression and more an attempt to get the essence of the person.

We just saw *Zombieland 2* on VOD and enjoyed it a lot. Do you think apocalyptic films are good to watch right now? I hope *Zombieland* is making people laugh during this time, despite some overlaps with the current crisis.

It is a tough time right now. But you have a couple of really cool movies that just came out, which should provide some cinematic escape. First let us ask about *Vivarium*. It's very *Twilight Zone*/*Black Mirror*-like. What attracted you to it?

I thought *Vivarium* was a brilliant, fever dream of a movie. It's the kind of nightmare you might have the day before you buy a house or get married or have a child, and I thought it

MUSIC

RACHEL LEVIN EXPLORES SELF-CARE WITH "MYSELF"

YouTube beauty influencer makes the transition to pop star

BY BRETT CALLWOOD

Way before the coronavirus crisis ensured that we'd be sitting in our homes for the immediate future, it was clear that influencers were taking over the media landscape. Teens making YouTube videos about gaming, food, beauty tips, etc. are pulling in millions and millions of viewers, and the sort of Instagram numbers that established and respected media outlets can only dream about.

Los Angeles-based Rachel Levin is one such person. She's 25 now but started making YouTube videos when she was 15. For a decade, she would consistently post videos every single week, building her following.

"Doing research and adapting, and finding my own style of video, so it's more unique to what I'm doing and not what everyone else is doing," she says. "The thing that got me started was, I would watch all these YouTubers that would do lip-syncing videos and do music videos, and I really loved watching those videos. I would remake little music videos."

During all of that, Levin noticed that one of her favorite YouTubers had started making beauty videos — and that sent her down a new path.

"That's what got me super into beauty videos, which in turn got me to, every time I was getting ready for school in the morning, do a whole makeup tutorial in the mirror," she says. "At that point, I was like 'This is a problem — I need to just film a makeup tutorial because I'm going crazy doing them in the mirror every morning.' That's what got me officially started but I didn't know anything could come of it, I was doing it just for fun."

Levin says that she's been singing for her entire life, but she wanted to keep that side of herself a secret from her many followers until now.

"It's something that I've actively hid from my followers since I've started YouTubing," she admits. "I started getting serious about it two years ago, when I decided I wanted to release some songs. I actually recorded 30 songs before I did the ones that I released, because I was learning my style."

That style, she says, is clearly pop. It's fresh and catchy, radio-friendly and infectious. It'll appeal to her young followers for sure. But she is looking to stretch her legs.

"The genre I'm leaning more toward in the future is like pop with hip-hop undertones," she says. "I just love things that are percussive and fun to sing, you want to snap along."

Levin's latest single, "Myself," dropped on February 14, produced and co-written by Brent Morgan ("I guess I technically co-produced it because I gave a lot of changes," she says.) The tune is essentially a love song to herself.

"It's basically about when you reach that point of confidence and you realize that the only love that truly matters is the love of

yourself, but I wanted the song to sound like I was singing to a boyfriend or significant other," she says. "That's what people would assume, because that's the general standard

people think of when they think of love. So I wanted to do a song that kind of mocks that concept in the beginning of the song, and then is just a normal cheesy love song and

by the chorus it switches to a love song for myself. When you listen back to the lyrics after you know it's a love song for myself, I wanted it to have a deeper meaning."

Levin currently has over 14 million YouTube subscribers (not a typo), the majority female between the ages of 12 and 24. She's built a loyal following through consistency and relatability, and they will very likely join her as she embarks on this musical journey. But how does one stand out in the crowded online pool?

"It's one of those things where everybody has to be unique, finding a way to showcase your personality as much as possible because every personality is unique," she says. "So I guess I just found a way to showcase my personality through the style of videos that I did. Very quirky, not scared to be weird types of videos, when I think a lot of people are in the phase of their lives where they are scared to truly be themselves. It isn't as hard to stand out once you've reached that point of confidence, when you're able to just be exactly who you are. So I feel like through doing videos I reached that point of confidence, and through reaching that point of confidence I really found who I really am and was able to focus in on that."

Of course, right now we're all stuck at home trying to survive a pandemic, so podcasters and YouTubers perhaps have more opportunities than even before with an effectively captive audience.

"I think giving them a safe haven and a place where it's not so centered around what's happening with the world is important," Levin says. "I know every corner you turn, it's like an anxiety-inducing article or news. A lot of stress-inducing things. So I would say sticking to more lighthearted things so that people have a safe place. Also addressing that everyone has a safe distance and all that stuff. Once you've addressed that, then make sure they have a place that is safe from the rest of the media."

These are certainly uncertain times, but influencers can potentially influence the mood of the nation.

"An influencer in my mind is somebody that is creating content on the internet, and grows a following through creating it," Levin says. "Through that, I guess they influence people. But I would say it's more people that people fall in love with through their content."

For now, most people's plans for 2020 are on hold. But when things do get going again, Levin has an EP in the works.

"It's a concept album for sure, a whole story that I went through, but I don't know if I can really explain what it's about," she says. "Hopefully out before the end of the year, is the goal. I should not get into a room with a producer right now, so it really depends what's going on with the world."

Visit Rachel Levin's YouTube channel at [RCLBeauty101](https://www.youtube.com/RCLBeauty101).



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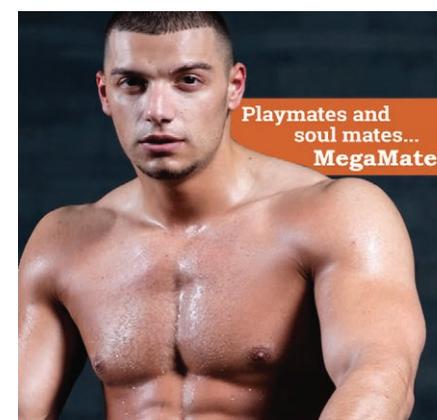
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