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“Gentefied”

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By Michele Stueven
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LA WEEKLY CONTENTS

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FEATURE...5
Netfl ix’s frisky dramedy Gentef ied returns for its second season this week. BY MICHELE STUEVEN.

NEWS...10
Mayor Eric Garcetti in the news, protesters hit City Hall over mandates, and West Hollywood approves historic minimum wage increase. BY ISAI ROCHA.

MUSIC...11
Josh Freese puts himself first with new solo album. BY BRETT CALLWOOD.

ENTERTAINMENT...12
Horror-themed TV is still hot for Fall. BY ERIN MAXWELL.

ART...13
A new exhibition at the Hilbert Museum illuminates Bay Area artist Henrietta Berk’s exuberant influences. BY LIZ GOLDMER.

ADVERTISING
CLASSIFIED...15
EDUCATION/EMPLOYMENT...15
REAL ESTATE/RENTALS...16
BULLETIN BOARD...16

ON THE COVER
Photography by Devyn Galindo/Netix

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Netflix’s frisky dramedy Gentefied returns for its second season this week in a more raw and poetic form.

BY MICHELE STUEVEN

Season one of Gentefied – the love letter executive producer America Ferreira and creators Marvin Lemus and Linda Yvette Chávez wrote to the Latinx and Boyle Heights communities – explored the toll of family separation, Brown love and joy in the face of adversity.

Things are going to get a lot steamier both inside and outside of the kitchen in season two, with storylines that will satisfy any grownup telenovela fan.

In the new season, which premieres this week, the Morales cousins fight alongside their widowed grandfather Pop in his battle to stay in the country, all while dealing with new love, new babies, estranged fathers and the potential loss of Mama Fina’s taco shop in Boyle Heights. Using humor, the smartly written show explores gentrification and the conflict between generations and cultures with a keen eye on the struggles of keeping a restaurant alive.

“We deal with real-life issues that can sometimes be super heavy, but we also experience joy and humor and love,” Ferrera tells L.A. Weekly at BLVD MRKT in Montebello, celebrating the debut of the second season. “I love that our community is portrayed with such style and life and vitality. That’s something the Latinx community doesn’t always get to have in its portrayal. It’s often just those same grim stories being told over and over again. It’s an opportunity to see ourselves represented in much more complex and joyful humanity. We’re not stripping away what’s real and what’s hard. It’s an opportunity to be seen in a different way.”

Conceived originally as a digital series by Marvin Lemus and Linda Yvette Chávez during many hours spent at Primera Taza.
Season one of Gentefied — the love letter executive producer America Ferrera and creators Marvin Lemus and Linda Yvette Chávez wrote to the Latinx and Boyle Heights communities — explored the toll of family separation, Brown love and joy in the face of adversity. Things are going to get a lot steamier both inside and outside of the kitchen in season two, with storylines that will satisfy any grownup telenovela fan.

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Coffee House on 1st Street, the story revolves around the three Morales cousins and Pop, who struggles to keep Mama Fina’s taco shop alive. Located on the corner of Cesar Chavez and Townsend Ave. in East L.A., where you’ll find La Ronda Restaurant, the powerful taco is at the center of all the family drama and dynamics.

Chris (played by Carlos Santos) is an aspiring chef with a business degree and dreams of attending culinary school in France and Ana (Karrie Martin) is a queer artist with aspirations of her own that include convincing the traditional community to accept her sexuality and relationship with Afro Latina Yessika Castillo (Julissa Calderon). Cousin Erik (Joseph Julian Soria) finds himself somewhere in between the past and the future while balancing a chip on his shoulder with the impending birth of his child with Lidia Solis (Annie Gonzalez).

Season two battles to keep Pop in the U.S. and Mama Fina’s alive

Series breakout star Santos plays an ambitious chef who is at the mercy of a Gordon Ramsay-type boss in a trendy arts district kitchen filled with a Latin staff that doesn’t find him Mexican enough. The character bears a sexy and uncanny resemblance to chef Mario Christerna, the charismatic Boyle Heights native who helped launch Brooklyn Ave. Pizza Co., breathing new life into the community.

“Tough it's worked in the restaurant industry before,” the Second City-trained stand-up comedian tells L.A. Weekly. “Once you've had that experience you never forget it and it's easy to tap into it. This show is the first chance I've had to showcase my acting ability in a leading role and the creators allow me to play with it and improvise. That's where the comedy comes from. Sometimes people work too hard to be funny. We deal with serious subjects, so it's a delicate dance with humor.”

All joking aside, Lemus admits that while the second season premiering this week will still find humor in those realistic problems, it will be a more emotionally raw and mature look at familia Morales.

“The show is incredibly personal,” says Lemus, who grew up in Bakersfield. “Linda and I write from the heart and we try to capture our community in a way that we haven’t seen before. We pull from all parts of our lives and write very truthfully and honestly. Chris is very much me. We chose Boyle Heights because it’s unique to gentrification and has such a rich history of activism. The term gentrification was coined in Boyle Heights and is an issue that has affected that community. It’s not just struggles from outsiders, but struggles within the community itself. We don’t pick sides. How do you continue to build and thrive without forgetting about the working class and those most at risk? This community is the perfect intersection for those questions we’ve been asking ourselves. It’s a place that captures both of my identities, as a Mexican and an American at the same time. I always feel like either one or the other. I wanted to create a show with that same feeling.”

Season two opens with the aging but fierce patriarch played by Joaquin Cosio being released from three months in jail for a minor infraction, facing deportation and becoming a media sensation which only results in more inter-family and intergenerational drama. Ana, who always means well, once again proves that the road to hell is paved with good intentions.
Ana is queer and her queer identity is not always supported and accepted,” says Ferrera, who was born in East L.A., grew up in the San Fernando Valley and graduated from USC. “None of us are purely one identity, we are this confluence and sometimes those things conflict. Yes, you’re there for your community and your cultural roots, but sometimes your roots are there for the other parts of your identity. As first-generation Latinx kids of immigrants, we have the experience of living with gentrification from the inside out – WE are gentrified. Our parents came to this country and in a lot of ways set us on the track of gentrifying from within. How do we assimilate but also maintain our roots? How do we aspire for something bigger without losing what we were? For us, this show is about the love this family has for each other, and who can’t relate to that? Who doesn’t have a crazy family that you love and hate at the same time?”

MAMA FINA’S ELEVATED TACOS
(★★★★★)

I

If there’s a gentrification whisperer in East Los Angeles, it’s Barney Santos, who founded BLVD MRKT with his wife Evelyn in the heart of downtown Montebello on Whittier Blvd. in an old carpet store space. An outdoor artisan food hall made up of decorative shipping container kitchens, their mission is to promote community and economic development. In addition to vendors like Pez Cantina, Cafe Santos, Los Taquero Mucho, NOLA Cajun & Creole as well as Alchemy Craft beer and wine, the couple has created an incubator program to help aspiring restaurateurs over the course of 24-28 months accelerate the growth of their part-time businesses. BLVD MRKT provides incubated companies with a fully-equipped shared kitchen in the food hall and access to capital, mentors, coaching and other resources to help launch their own businesses.

“We live here and saw a need to rejuvenate the downtown area which was crumbling and in complete disarray with broken windows and empty storefronts around 2008,” Barney says in between taco bites at the “Taste of the Blvd” cast party last week. “We partnered with the city of Montebello and took over this city-owned lot. It’s hard. Most developers don’t want to invest in these communities, they just want to follow their formulas. One thing I know is that communities evolve on their own. We’re trying to bring economic development to our neighborhood and we’re working with the Cesar Chavez Foundation to bring affordable housing across the street. There are so many great organizations out there willing to help. I just want to create a platform for other people to express themselves using this space.”

The “Taste of the Blvd” continues at BLVD MRKT at 6 p.m Friday, November 12 on “Gentefied Night” where the food hall will cover the cost of one of the Gentefied inspired dishes at the restaurants while supplies last.

The lineup includes:

From Pez Cantina:
“Fish out of Water” – Albacore tuna tostada, avocado crema, fennel, red onion, crispy shallots and Baja ponzu sauce. “It’s based on Erik’s feeling like a fish out of water at Stanford,” says owner and chef Bret Thompson, who also owns the flagship Pez Cantina in downtown L.A. with wife Lucy and is
From Cafe Santos:

“Piel Canela Latte” – The Morales family inspired us to honor our ancestors by adding a traditional drink to our menu. For us, coffee represents familia, amor y unidad. Café Santo’s Piel Canela latte is inspired by the good times spent with our loved ones “chismeando” over a Cafecito before bedtime. Made with ingredients that are part of our essence, this drink contains ingredients like cinnamon, which gives the flavor and spice that we as Latinos put in everything we do; sugar cane, which adds the sweetness of family gatherings; orange peel, which brings the zest into our life; and anise, which symbolizes the importance of preserving our culture.

From Los Taquero Mucho:

“Mama Fina’s Legacy” – Chicharron con carne topped with a mild Pico de Gallo Cúrtido, drizzled with mango chipotle sauce and then topped with queso cotija, cilantro and dabs of avocado salsa.

We decided to call it the Mama Fina’s legacy because in the show Casimiro and Chris are determined to make sure Mama Fina’s legacy continues. Casimiro strives to protect the power of the family, their love for food, their differences, their complexities, and their layers of love for each other. Chris wants to build on her legacy and expand on traditions all while still keeping true to his roots. It’s two generations pushing to keep a family’s legacy alive. We created a traditional taco de Chicharrón and have expanded on it by including our family’s culture.

The taco de Chicharrón is topped with a pico de gallo Cúrtido which is a combination of Mexican and Guatemalan traditions. We then expanded on it with the mango chipotle drizzle. We wanted to incorporate our roots and also want to make sure our family’s roots and legacies continue throughout our generations to come. Just as Chris and Casimiro push to make sure Mama Fina’s legacy continues, we want to make sure our family’s legacy continues to honor our parents who took this risk of coming to this country to allow us to have the opportunity of a better life.

From NOLA Cajun & Creole:

Los Nietos Jambalaya – mildly spiced mixed rice, bell pepper, onion, celery and NOLA Creole sauce served with shrimp and pork delicacies. Jambalaya is a Louisiana-born dish that has its origins in historical influences from France and Spain. Traditionally, the dish includes a large mix of amazing complex flavors including sausage of some sort, often smoked meat such as pork andouille, along with chicken and seafood, such as shrimp. The vegetables are usually a mixture known as the “holy trinity” in Cajun cooking, consisting of onion, celery and green bell pepper. This rich and complex explosion of flavors reminds us of Pop’s grandchildren.

Chris, Erik and Ana themselves are the “Holy Trinity” of Pop’s grandkids. Together they make for such a rich and complex explosion of emotion and love for one another. This dynamic makes for such a rich experience in the show. The show’s characters struggle to find their own individual identities separate from Pop’s and Mama Fina’s but what they realize is that, just like Jambalaya, they make such a rich, beautiful and loving experience together. Essentially creating something bigger and better when together than when separate.

From VCHOS:

Our “Mushroom Trip” pupusas are inspired by the episode when Crazy Dave takes Chris and Erik camping to find themselves and eat lots of shrooms. It’s a mix of different types of mushrooms blended with vegan cheeses.

“Gentefied Night” at BLVD MRKT

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In this week’s news, Mayor Eric Garcetti tested positive for COVID-19, protesters hit City Hall over vaccine mandates, West Hollywood approves historic minimum wage increase, while Kaiser nurses get ready to strike.

BY ISAI ROCHA

Mayor of Los Angeles Eric Garcetti has tested positive for COVID-19 while attending the United Nations Climate Change summit in Glasgow, Scotland.

The announcement was made public on Wednesday, Nov. 3, through his Twitter account, with his team saying Garcetti was “feeling good.”

Garcetti said he was vaccinated in January 2021, while helping at the COVID-19 vaccination site at Dodger Stadium.

It has been more than nine months since Garcetti was fully vaccinated and said, “I can’t wait to get my booster,” according to an interview on ABC7.

In December 2020, Garcetti was placed in quarantine and isolated for 10 days after his daughter had tested positive for COVID-19.

The mayor was chosen to be U.S. ambassador to India in July, but Garcetti has yet to be confirmed by the U.S. Senate and continues his term as mayor of L.A.

West Hollywood Council Approves $17 Minimum Wage – Highest in the Country

The West Hollywood City Council unanimously approved an ordinance to increase its city hourly minimum wage to $17.64 by 2023, which would make it the country’s highest.

A gradual increase would begin in 2022, before reaching a full $17.64 by July of the following year.

“Cost of living is rising everywhere – it’s getting more & more expensive to live, work, & raise a family. Our minimum wage should reflect that reality,” Councilmember Lindsey P. Horvath said in a Twitter post. “I am proud to be part of this thoughtful step for our City. The wealth generated by an increased minimum wage will raise more people into the middle class, drive more consumer spending, & create a more stable, prosperous, & business-friendly economy.”

Not all West Hollywood business owners were thrilled with the timing of the ordinance, with reality star Lisa Vanderpump being a vocal leader in its opposition.

Vanderpump owns two restaurants in West Hollywood named “Pump” and “Tom Tom,” and said that businesses should be given more time to recover from the pandemic before enforcing an employee wage hike. She also added that employees who earn tips should not be included in the same tier as those who do not earn tips.

“West Hollywood could venture forward as the first to implement a tiered wage structure that would not only be fair on workers, but maintainable for businesses,” Vanderpump said in a letter to the council. “We also urge you to carve out different structures for tipped employees of the hospitality industry so that moving forward there is a sustainable model that not only protects hourly employees, but the businesses that must stay operational in order to employ them.”

The current minimum hourly wage in California is $13 per hour for businesses with fewer than 26 employees and $14 per hour for businesses with more than 24 employees. Both California wages will increase by $1 at the start of 2022.

Thousands of Kaiser Permanente Nurses Prepare to Strike Nov. 15

A 10-day notice was formally given to Kaiser Permanente as more than 32,000 nurses and workers prepare for a strike.

The United Nurses Associations of California and Union of Health Care Professionals (UNAC/UHCP) said on Nov. 15, its 21,000 southern California nurses, pharmacists, midwives, physical and occupational therapists, nurse practitioners and physician assistants would go on strike.

Additionally, 7,400 members of United Steelworkers and 3,400 members of the Oregon Federation of Nurses and Healthcare Professionals (OFNHP) would also strike against Kaiser Permanente.

“The lives of our patients and the health of our communities are dependent on the outcome of these negotiations,” UNAC/UHCP President Denise Duncan said. “For weeks, we’ve been beating back a two-tier wage package which would impact our ability to hire, recruit and retain during a severe shortage of nurses, health care workers and professionals – wage proposals that resemble those of a slash-and-burn corporation, not the leading health care provider that our members helped build. For health care providers, a strike is always a last resort, but it’s clear from the employer’s latest proposals that this is the path they’ve chosen.”

Kaiser Permanente nurses have been working without a contract since Oct. 1 and have asked for an annual 4% wage increase for its members through 2023. The unions are also asking for Kaiser to not reduce the wages of new hires.

Kaiser Permanente countered with a 1% annual wage increase and a 1% bonus, and has asked workers not to walk out.

“We ask that our employees reject a call to walk away from the patients who need them,” a Kaiser representative said in a written statement. “Our priority is to continue to provide our members with high-quality, safe care. In the event of any kind of work stoppage, our facilities will be staffed by our physicians along with trained and experienced managers and contingency staff.”

Hundreds Gather at L.A. City Hall to Protest Vaccine Mandates

With the city of Los Angeles enforcing a new indoor COVID-19 vaccine order on Monday, Nov. 8, hundreds gathered at city hall in protest of it and other mandates.

A group called “Firefighters 4 Freedom” were among the demonstration’s organizers, with first responders for LAPD, the L.A. County Sheriff’s Department and LAFD members also present.

First responders have pushed back against the vaccine mandates of late, seeking exemptions, transfers to departments outside of L.A., and retirement options.

The Firefighters 4 Freedom organization has also filed a lawsuit against the city of Los Angeles that read, “Your attempt to coerce thousands of city employees, including firefighters into getting a medical treatment they do not want violates the law in many ways.”

The protest was not solely against the latest vaccine mandate, but also mask mandates, and city/county mandates requiring municipal employees to show proof of vaccination against COVID-19, or risk termination.

Surrounded by American flags and protest signs, the mostly maskless crowd called the mask and vaccine mandates “tyranny,” with a notable group of firefighters holding a sign reading, “Firemen deserve medical choice not unemployment.”

Employees for the city of Los Angeles have until Dec. 18 to show proof of full vaccination after a deadline extension.

The vaccine mandate that went into effect Nov. 8 requires Los Angeles businesses to ask for proof of vaccinations to enter gyms, restaurants, bars and several other indoor settings.
**ONE MINUTE MAYHEM**

Josh Freese puts himself first with new solo album.

BY BRETT CALLWOOD

Josh Freese referring to himself as lazy is ironic. Freese may well be the busiest man on the planet. Weezer, A Perfect Circle, Sublime (with Rome), Nine Inch Nails and Guns N’ Roses are just a few highlights of a list that’s as long as your arm. He’s not a one trick pony either; he’s also performed on albums by pop artists such as Kelly Clarkson, Katy Perry and Miley Cyrus. Nowadays, he’s working with Sting and the Vandals and the Offspring.

The guy never stops working. So when the pandemic locked us all down and effectively put a stop to touring, he got itchy. He started writing and recording a bunch of one-minute songs for the sake of a little art project. Some of them turned into songs that sounded like regular rock & roll songs, and some of them just turned into weird little one-minute snippets of things.

Freese referring to himself as lazy is ironic. “I started writing and recording these songs with no intention at all of releasing them, or at least selling them,” Freese says. “I didn’t want to go through the whole process of making a record. I’m too lazy. I love the process of writing and recording music and doing it on my own. I have a home studio that I always complain about never having enough time to work in, so I didn’t have an excuse now. So I went back there and started writing one-minute songs, which is also very non-committal. It’s not very daunting to have to write a one-minute song for the sake of a little art project. Some of them were a stop to touring, he got itchy. He started writing and recording a bunch of one-minute songs for the hell of it. But when old friend Stone Gossard (Pearl Jam) resurrected his Loose Groove record label and propositioned Freese with the idea of releasing an album, he was all for it.

“I started writing and recording these songs with no intention at all of releasing them, or at least selling them,” Freese says. “I didn’t want to go through the whole process of making a record. I’m too lazy. I love the process of writing and recording music and doing it on my own. I have a home studio that I always complain about never having enough time to work in, so I didn’t have an excuse now. So I went back there and started writing one-minute songs, which is also very non-committal. It’s not very daunting to have to write a one-minute song for the sake of a little art project. Some of them turned into songs that sounded like regular rock & roll songs, and some of them just turned into weird little one-minute snippets of things.”

Freese referring to himself as lazy is ironic. Or maybe just plain wrong. He’s always on the go. Very often though, he’s working on other people’s music. It’s great to hear what pours out when he’s not restricted at all.

“'The fact that it was done from a 100 percent pure place, not trying to achieve anything or make any money from it or any of that stuff, it was really fun and something I’d be doing whether it be released or not,” he says. “Aside from having it not be some major undertaking, I also wanted to make little fun videos, literally on my phone. Put up these one-minute songs, make full little videos and post them on Instagram, just for the fuck of it.”

One of the interesting things about the album, which is called *Just a Minute, Vol.1*, is that it runs the gamut of rock subgenres. Opening track “Ain’t Nuthin Funny Bout 2020” is a Revolting Cocks-esque industrial-tinged tune. Then “Where I Have to Go” is more straight-up rock. Then “The Dwarves and the Queens” is a punky riot. That’s all great, but Freese had to find a way to make the record flow.

“I don’t know if it flows or not,” he says. “Some people take that really seriously. There’s an art to it and I’ve watched people drive themselves crazy sequencing an 11, 12 song record. I didn’t want that to become a burden. So at first, I was like ‘fuck it, the way I listen to it on my computer or in my car is automatically alphabetized.’ At first, I was gonna do that. I like starting off the record with the ‘Ain’t Nuthin Funny Bout 2020’ song because that really set a tone for all of us last year.”

The fact that the album has *Vol. 1* in the title suggests that there’s going to be a *Vol.2.*

“Volume 2 is done and mastered, and the cover’s done,” Freese says. “If I needed to put it out in a month, I probably could. But we’re gonna wait. I have to tie up a few loose ends on the artwork and the inner sleeve stuff. But it’s recorded, mixed, mastered, and most of it’s ready as far as the theme, the look, and the tie-in to the first album. I’m hoping for January, maybe February.”

Since concerts started happening again, Freese has played sporadic dates with Devo, Sting, the Vandals and the Offspring.

“The Vandals and the Offspring have been longtime friends,” he says. “A few months ago when the drummer wouldn’t get vaccinated, Dexter called me and said they need someone who is able to go out in the real world and do this stuff – could I fill in for some shows? There was a handful of stuff I was able to do, and then I had some Devo obligations. I had a Sting obligation a couple of weeks ago and I’m doing some stuff with Sting Vegas. I’ve probably done a total of five gigs with the Offspring, but I’m going to the UK with them next month.”

When you have Sting, Devo, the Offspring and the Vandals all pulling a limb each, you know you’re doing something right. Freese has been in the Vandals since his mid-teens and the band remains close to his heart.

“All of us have our real jobs, mine being the drummer in other bands that make decent money,” he says. “But I always like to go back and do gigs with them. I always joke that I need to keep the Vandals in my back pocket for punk rock cred while I work with some of these pop superstars.”

Josh Freese doesn’t need to worry about his “punk rock cred” any time soon. The guy has seen and done it all and, like we say, he never stops working. He’s trying to find balance in his life though.

“I’m always balancing how much I can be gone, and how much I can be around for my kids and standard poodles,” he says. *The Just a Minute, Vol.1* album is out now.
Halloween might be behind us, but horror-themed TV is still hot for Fall

BY ERIN MAXWELL

Summer reboots fare against the originals. The show is hypnotic as it entices viewers with the promise of new challenges and unexpected twists. However, it's important to note that the show is not for everyone, as it includes scenes of violence and graphic content.

**Squid Game**

The show is a small screen adaptation of a viral internet game. The story focuses on #456, Seong Gi-hun (Park Hae-soo) who is playing by his own rules. He's a former teacher who was invited to participate in a mysterious game. Con-testants are forced to endure schoolyard games with life or death consequences for the chance to win a fortune. Each round unfolds, so do the backstories of each player, including a North Korean defecto (Jung Ho-yeon), a young Pakistani father (Anupam Tripathi) and an investment banker (Park Hae-soo) who is playing by his own rules. The show is hypotonic as it entices viewers with a polychromatic set design that seems to highlight the bloodsport. The look, the viciousness of the games themselves, and the well-crafted characters keep viewers entranced, wanting to binge episode after the next.

**Midnight Mass**

Based on the short story by Stephen King, the show is set within the isolated fishing town of Crockett Island, where the insular community is buzzing when a new priest moves in after its elderly Monsignor goes MIA. Young but filled with fire, Father Paul Hill (Hamish Linklater) quickly charms the residents with his optimistic sermons and willingness to help the downtrodden. Soon after his arrival, the residents undergo changes: old aches subside, wounds heal, and for a chosen few, a new thirst develops.

The real menace isn't what's lurking in the mysterious box Father Hill brought him from his travels in Damascus, but within the residents who turn a blind eye to obvious warning signs. Their willingness to follow without question releases the bats from the belfry, allowing all hell to breach. And my, is it amazing to watch.

Like a cross between Stephen King's Salem Lot and the Alfredsons' Let the Right One In, backdropped by the dilapidated sets from the Child's Play films, Chucky returns to his hometown, and to new owner Jake, a 14-year-old with a whole host of issues. Soon, Chucky starts “helping” Jake with his problems, stabbing his way through his teen angst. In addition to Chucky's relationship with the conflicted Jake, the show also digs deep into his childhood as a burgeoning maniac, who started by killing his mother before blossoming into a homicidal monster. The show also examines the effects of his actions on his family. "Samantha Sloyan as Bev Keane, an antagonist, is as likable as ever. Her involvement in the show helps create a sense of tension and suspense.

**Child's Play**

The show is a small screen adaptation of the 1997 teen slasher pic, which achieved box office success but was considered by many to be a melodramatic Scream wannabe with half the fun and twice the kitsch. Almost 25 years later, the same can be said about the latest TV adaptation. The plot is familiar: a girl returns home from her first year of college and is quietly welcomed home by her loving father. She finds something new on her mirror in blood. Facebook leads to the previous summer, when an intoxicated teen (Madison Isemann) takes her buddies for a joyride before their angering behavior causes her to accidentally crash into one of their own. The gang decide to hide the evidence, and one year later, they are forced to face their terrible choices when they are hunted down one by one.

**Summer** is all style which at best, offers 20% mystery, 20% musical interludes and 60% shots of people driving while talking on their phones or texting. There is a clever bit of misdirection in the first few episodes, giving the plot an unexpected Friday twist. But once it’s revealed to the audience, the show quickly returns to its two-dimensional characterizations of Gen Z and scrambled, unremarkable storytelling.

The fatal flaw of the series is the characters we're supposed to care about. Trapped by try-hard dialogue, awful stereotypes, and writing filled with pop culture references instead of character development or humor, the “teens” are annoying at best. In fact, all the characters are pretty despicable, so whether they live or die is of no consequence; though it might make for a fairly fun hate-watch as episodes continue to roll out this Fall.
REDISCOVERING THE IRREPRESSIBLE BAY AREA ARTIST HENRIETTA BERK

A new exhibition at the Hilbert Museum illuminates her exuberant influences

BY LIZ GOLDNER

Henrietta Berk rejoiced in combining figurative, abstract, expressionist and fauvist influences in her paintings. Working from her Oakland, California studio in the 1950s, 60s and 70s, she began composing her artworks by squeezing large swaths of brightly colored oils onto the canvases. She then picked up brushes and palette knives, swirling the paint into portraits, everyday scenes, landscapes and still lifes — while dancing to popular music of the day, an activity maintaining her elegant socialite figure.

As an intuitive painter whose focus was the freedom, joy and creative delight experienced through artmaking, Berk elicited ongoing praise. Critic Miriam Dungan Cross wrote about Berk in 1962, the “energy released in her lifetime, but later faded into oblivion, was well-known in the Bay Area art world during her vision...”

After purchasing her painting “Wading” in 1961, oil on canvas, Mark Hilbert, explaining his vision to mount a retrospective and to publish a catalogue of her work, “Mark immediately recognized her talent,” Stern said, “stating that he loved the painting, would like to acquire it and hang it prominently in his museum.”

Hilbert added, “When I first saw her work, I was absolutely floored by her brilliant use of color, and her thickly laid-on brushstrokes that add so much texture to her paintings. I bought my first Berk painting shortly thereafter.”

In August 2021, the Hilbert Museum opened Henrietta Berk: In Living Color, curated by Gordon McClelland, the first major exhibition of her work since 1981. It is the museum’s largest one-person show with 43 paintings from 18 collectors and from Mark and Jan Hilbert’s collection. Museum Director Mary Platt said, “The Hilbert Museum is proud to bring the work of this brilliant artist, who first flourished in an era and in a milieu that challenged women artists, back to the forefront where she belongs.”

Henrietta Berk, “Picnic” 1962-1964, oil on canvas, The Hilbert Collection

In “Living Color,” which is filled with richly textured, colorful oils, depicts Bay Area scenes and portraits while bridging abstraction with representation. Yet Berk’s paintings diverge from the California Scene Paintings that have characterized Hilbert Museum shows since its 2016 opening. The California Scene Painting genre includes oils, watercolors and gouaches featuring landscapes, cityscapes and rural scenes as backdrops for people at work and at play. The paintings focus on culturally relevant settings in California, primarily from the 1930s through the 1970s. The jaw-dropping In Living Color, indicating a broadening of horizons for the Hilbert, is prescient for its future. What new art genres will the museum explore in the coming years, especially after its 2023 expansion with twice as much gallery space?

The Berk exhibition is accompanied by the beautifully illustrated catalog, In Living Color: The Art and Life of Henrietta Berk. This literary expression of Stern’s vision elucidates how Berk unearthed her artistic talents and sensibilities, becoming a major figure in the Bay Area art scene and later in Southern California, winning many prizes along the way.

One of Berk’s earliest paintings, “Me or Façade” (1960), a self-portrait of a woman with a red beehive hairdo, illustrates her courageous approach to paint application and bold use of color. She is quoted as saying, “Color has a profound impact on one’s mood.” Her “Model in Red” (1962), displayed at the exhibition entrance, and possibly another self-portrait, demonstrates Berk’s range of styles and technical proficiency.

“Wading” (1961) features a mother and three children frolicking in the blue and green water with a Northern California landscape forming the background. “Summer Romance” (1962), a poignant scene of a couple relaxing on a beach, comprises broad expressionistic brushstrokes. “Lunch Gossips” (1962) includes brightly clad, fashionably dressed women enjoying each other’s company during a sun-drenched afternoon. With white impasto paint filling the background, the scene could be from the artist’s own life.


Mark Hilbert (founder with his wife Jan of the Hilbert Museum of California Art, and Chapman University trustee) is determined to change this situation. After consulting with Santa Monica art dealer Steven Stern, Hilbert recognized the brilliance of Berk’s work.

Stern explained, “One day while searching online auction sites, I glanced at a Berk painting and was awestruck by its exceptional quality. I had stumbled across the most meaningful discovery of my career. After I purchased four Berk paintings, I was amazed at her mastery of color, control of design and confident brushwork, the hallmarks of a highly skilled, well-taught artist. I also discovered her tutelage by artist Richard Diebenkorn, extensive exhibition history, fiery personality and her Hollywood fame, as many prominent actors, musicians and industry icons collected her work.”

Stern also learned that before actively embracing painting, Berk was a traditional 1950s-era housewife and vivacious socialite whose husband was ambivalent about her artistic yearnings. But spurred by her love of art, she began taking evening classes, studying under several Bay Area painters, and soon began achieving prominence in the Northern California art world.

In Living Color is on view through January 15 at the Hilbert Museum of California Art, 167 N. Atchison St., Orange; Free; hilbertmuseum.org.
Veterans of the medical cannabis movement gathered last week to celebrate 25 years since the passage of Proposition 215, legalizing medical cannabis in California. While many of the San Francisco AIDS activists that helped carry the ball across the finish line are no longer with us to celebrate the mark, plenty of individuals took part in the quest to gain access to medical cannabis. Many would face persecution for their involvement over the years, but here, 25 years later, they very much sit on the right side of history, regardless of DEA raids or time served.

Is there anyone we've felt worse for in the criminal justice system over the last 25 years than the cannabis operators who found themselves behind bars despite their attempts to operate in full compliance with California law? Many of these people still sit behind bars or continue to deal with the aftermath of their efforts to help patients live the best quality of life possible.

Last Friday’s day of panels and parties in San Francisco was not just the anniversary of what many people consider 0 AD in the medical cannabis movement, but was also meant to recognize those struggles that came after and continued for many small farmers in the age of legalization as they struggle just to exist.

But make no mistake about it, this was a celebration of progress despite the challenges of this moment.

“Of all the events I’ve thrown in the past 30 years, starting with quarterly hemp rallies in L.A. in the ‘90s, I think we got the most positive feedback on this one,” California NORML Deputy Director Ellen Komp told L.A. Weekly. “People told me they were moved, sometimes to tears, by the program, and that it re-energized them for the ongoing fight.”

Komp was also thankful it wasn’t just the OGs in the room. She found it heartening to learn that people, especially young people, care about the historical roots of Prop. 215 and recognize what a watershed event it was when it passed, lighting the fire for the reforms in marijuana and drug policy we’ve now seen nationally and internationally.

“I must give kudos to Cal NORML’s director Dale Gieringer who put together most of the informative program, and to the attendees who
traveled to gather together at what was compared to a 25th high school reunion of activists, many of whom hadn’t seen each other for years. We’re also grateful to our sponsors who made the day possible,” Komp said. “We do need the industry to step up going forward and support the rights of their customers, many of whom are still facing discrimination in the workplace, unable to consume cannabis in public spaces or even in their own apartments, or having their medical and parental rights infringed upon. And we must release all marijuana prisoners and lower our taxes!”

A younger advocate recognized for her work by the old guard last week was Amber Senter of Supernova Women. Senter has been a lead-
1. Summons: SUMMONS (Family Law) NOTICE TO RESPONDENT MICHAEL DAVID WILSON, YOU HAVE BEEN SUED. Petitioner’s name is ALEXANDRA SIPELSKA WILSON. CASE NUMBER 21STFL0441. You have 30 calendar days from the date of this summons and Petition are served on you to file a Response form FL-120 at the court and have a copy served on the Petitioner. A letter, phone call, or court appearance will not protect you. If you do not file your written Response on time, the court may make orders affecting your marriage or domestic partnership, your property, and custody of your children. You may be ordered to pay support and attorney fees and costs. For legal advice, contact a lawyer immediately. Get help finding a lawyer at the California Legal Services Web site (www.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local county bar association. NOTICE: RESTRAINING ORDERS: STANDARD FAMILY LAW (10/15, 10/22, 10/29, August 18, 2021. Publishing: served as an Individual. PALETZ LLP, 12711 Ventura Blvd., Chatsworth, CA 91311. MAILING ADDRESS: SAME.

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME CASE NUMBER: 21CHCP00534
PETITION OF RICHARD MICHAEL BOZZO FOR CHANGE OF NAME
To All Interested Persons: 1. Petitioner: RICHARD MICHAEL BOZZO filed a petition with this court for a change of name as follows: Present name: RICHARD MICHAEL BOZZO to proposed name: RICHARD VASTANO
2. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name change described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

NOTICE OF HEARING Date: December 20th 2021 Time: 10:30am Dept: C Room: 312. The address of the court is SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, County of Los Angeles 12720 Norwalk Blvd. Norwalk, CA 90650. MAILING ADDRESS: SAME. 3. A copy of this Order To Show Cause shall be published at least once each week for four consecutive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation printed in this county: LA Weekly Date: 10/20/21. Judge Margaret B. Bernal Judge of the Superior Court.

LIVE-IN DOMESTIC COUPLE
Looking for a legal, honest, vaccinated, energetic live-in proactive couple in WLA area (2 acres, 3 adults, animals, informal lifestyle). Job requirements: housekeeping, handy person skills, cooking, chauffeuring, and car maintenance. English speaking, non-smoking, and experienced with solid references. Work 5 days a week. Tue-Sat, competitive salary + benefits. Serious inquiries only please. Please send resume or work history and qualifications to April at amarkresumes@gmail.com.

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