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by Shana Nys Dambrot

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U.S. SUPREME COURT OVERTURNS ROE V. WADE DECISION

BY ISAI ROCHA

The U.S. Supreme Court overturned the landmark Roe v. Wade decision on Friday, June 24, stating the constitution “makes no reference” to abortion rights.

The 6-3 majority decision on the 1973 ruling argued that abortion rights were different than other rights withheld by the 14th amendment.

“The constitution makes no reference to abortion, and no such right is implicitly protected by any constitutional provision,” the court’s voting majority wrote. “Until the latter part of the 20th century, such a right was entirely unknown by American law.”

In a 66-page dissent, Justices Stephen Breyer, Elena Kagan and Sonia Sotomayor wrote that although some states will still allow abortions, women who cannot afford to incur the costs of going to another state for an abortion will “suffer from today’s decision.”

“Whatever the exact scope of the coming laws, one result of today’s decision is certain: the curtailment of women’s rights, and of their status as free and equal citizens,” the dissenting justices wrote. “As of today, this Court holds, a State can always force a woman to give birth, prohibiting even the earliest abortions. A State can thus transform what, when freely undertaken, is a wonder into what, when forced, may be a nightmare.”

On the west coast, multiple states, including California declared a “commitment to reproductive freedom” following the Supreme Court’s announcement.

The governors of California, Oregon and Washington joined by saying their states would continue to provide reproductive health care.

“The Supreme Court has made it clear – they want to strip women of their liberty and let Republican states replace it with mandated birth because the right to choose an abortion is not ‘deeply rooted in history,’” California Governor Gavin Newsom said. “They want to turn back the clock to a time when women had no right to make decisions about their own bodies, when women had to seek care in the shadows and at great danger, when women were not treated as equal citizens under the law. This is another devastating step toward erasing the rights and liberties Americans have fought for on battlefields, in courthouses and in capitals.”

The court’s decision came weeks after a Supreme Court opinion leaked from Justice Samuel Alito, suggesting that the decision would be overturned.

After being authenticated, the leaked document led to nationwide protests, and swift responses from pro-abortion states.

CALIFORNIA TO PUT ABORTION RIGHTS DECISION ON NOVEMBER BALLOT

California will allow its voters to decide if abortion and contraception rights may be added to the state constitution during the November elections.

The state legislature approved the measure for the the ballot to ask if “the state shall not deny or interfere with an individual’s reproductive freedom in their most intimate decisions, which includes their fundamental right to choose to have an abortion and their fundamental right to choose or refuse contraceptives.”

In addition to the ballot measure, Newsom signed an executive order that would make California what he called “a reproductive safe haven” for women who travel from other states for reproductive services by not distributing patient information to out-of-state sources.

While California currently offers abortion care under the state’s constitutional right to privacy, legislators felt the ballot initiative would remove ambiguity for potential future issues that may stem from the Supreme Court’s recent ruling to overturn Roe v. Wade.

ABORTION RIGHTS PROTESTS TO CONTINUE IN LOS ANGELES

After a weekend of pro-abortion protests that saw clashes with police, marchers stopping freeway traffic and even an altercation involving former Full House star Jodie Sweetin, protesters plan to hit the streets again this weekend.

While several Angelenos have taken to the streets of downtown Los Angeles for several consecutive days now, the local organization “Rise 4 Abortion Rights L.A.” announced an official rally and march scheduled for Saturday, July 2 at 1 p.m., outside the federal courthouse located on 350 First Street.

Despite California being a state that already supports abortion care, protesters immediately voiced their anger at the Supreme Court’s 6-3 vote to overturn the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision.

On multiple occasions, protesters found themselves on portions of the 110 and 101 freeway near downtown L.A., leading LAPD to declare a citywide tactical alert and give constant traffic alerts as hundreds of protesters moved their way to different areas of the city.

Videos posted to social media showed instances of police and protesters engaging in shoving matches on multiple occasions.

Most notably, a video of former Full House star Jodie Sweetin surfaced, as she

claimed to be attempting to get protesters off the freeway and was promptly shoved to the ground by an LAPD officer.

The video was posted by Los Angeles-based videographer Michael Ade, to which Sweetin responded by saying, “Thank you for posting. Love everyone out there in the streets fighting for what’s right.”

The Rise 4 Abortion organization has stated it plans to continue staging protests until “abortion on demand is legal nationwide.”

LA WEEKLY STAFF TAKES HOME MULTIPLE AWARDS AT SOCAL JOURNALISM AWARDS

BY EVAN J. LANCASTER

After receiving several nominations, the L.A. Weekly staff brought home a total of seven awards, including four first place awards and Journalist of the Year, during the 64th Annual Southern California Journalism Awards on Saturday, June 25.

LA Weekly news reporter Isai Rocha took home the second-highest award of the evening with “Journalist of the Year” in the under 50,000 circulation category. The judges commented that Rocha “delivered the goods” in his reporting on several key issues, including homelessness in Los Angeles.

“Whether exploring issues of diversity, pandemic inequities, or homelessness, Rocha delivers the goods by putting into sharp relief situations and issues many – including city officials and politicians – would rather ignore or keep in the dark. His work is commendable and deserving of recognition by both the public and his peers.”

In addition to being named Journalist of the Year, Rocha also received first place for “Hard News Story” for reporting on a stabbing during an anti-vaccination rally near Los Angeles City Hall last summer. The judges added that Rocha did an “excellent job” reporting and getting quotes from both sides of the violence.

“Well-written and covered all the bases for a breaking news story. Excellent job of gathering facts but also getting the quotes from protagonists that told the story in human terms and dramatized the polarization driving some people to violence over a public health issue,” the judges commented.

Also nominated for the Journalist of the Year category was fellow L.A. Weekly culture and entertainment editor Lina Lecaro. In 2021, Lecaro earned a first place finish in the “Feature Profile” category, for a piece on legendary filmmaker Spike Lee’s

life, films and current social issues. Lecaro also finished second in the “Journalist of the Year” category for print publications under 50,000 in circulation.

This year, Lecaro claimed third place for her feature on Licorice Pizza and an additional third-place recognition for her feature on actor Joseph Gordon-Levitt.

Another third place win for LA Weekly staff saw Arts Editor Shana Nys Dambrot recognized for her piece titled “Tiffany Alfonseca at the Mistake Room,” published at Artillery Mag.

Music editor Brett Callwood also helped anchor more first-place achievements for the alt-weekly. This year, Callwood was recognized as the top online columnist, with the judges emphasizing the thoughtful and expertly written approach of Callwood’s work with his “Basslines and Protest Signs” column for idobi Radio.

Callwood also took home first place for his LA Weekly feature titled, “Can Our Stages Be Saved,” in the “Entertainment News or Feature” category.

Focusing on the music industry during and post-pandemic, Callwood investigated the struggle of thousands of venue workers, bartenders and other professionals affected by the stoppage – and seemingly slow start of the return to the stage.

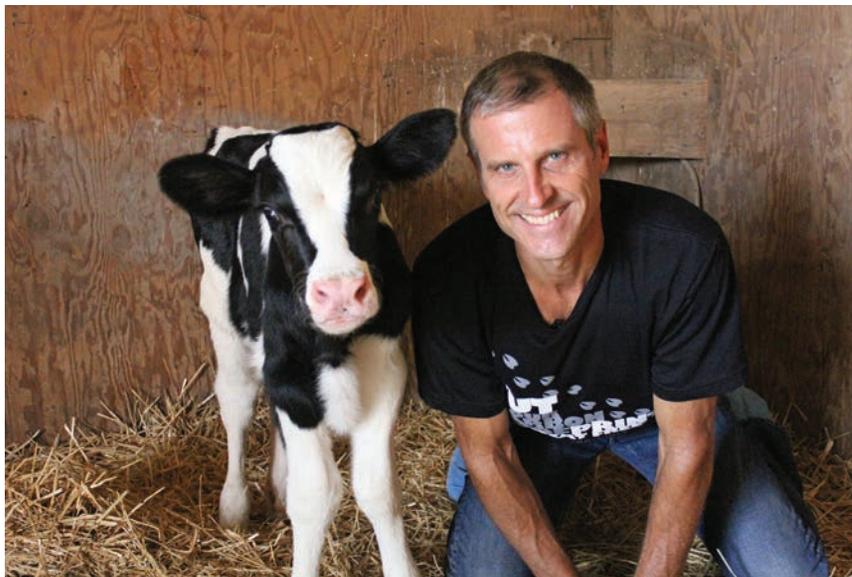
For this, the judges recognized the fact that this group had been marginalized, and potentially “overlooked.”

“This story was a great illustration of a group of people who have struggled through the pandemic – and continue to struggle, even as the pandemic is seemingly ending,” according to the judges. “While the author believes the mentioning of this topic is considered frivolous to discuss, the entertainment industry employs thousands of people and often they (like restaurants, bars, others) were overlooked.”

FARMER JOHN IS CLOSING, BUT ANIMALS AND WORKERS WILL STILL SUFFER

Closing the Vernon facility is not an easy answer.

BY GENE BAUR



This op-ed about the closing of L.A. landmark Farmer John comes from L.A. native, world-renowned activist, and national bestselling author Gene Baur. Baur is President and cofounder of Farm Sanctuary, America's first farm animal sanctuary and advocacy organization, which operates in Acton. Hailed as "the conscience of the food movement" by TIME magazine, for more than 35 years Baur has traveled extensively around the country, campaigning to raise awareness about the abuses of industrialized factory farming and our current food system. Credited with initiating passage of the first U.S. laws to prohibit cruel farming confinement methods, winning the first-ever cruelty conviction at a U.S. stockyard, and inspiring an international farm sanctuary movement, he is author of two national bestselling books: "Farm Sanctuary: Changing Hearts and Minds About Animals and Food"

and "Living the Farm Sanctuary Life."

Growing up in Los Angeles, I remember Farmer John's "Dodger Dogs" and other products that were marketed with the company's farm-friendly image. Similar illustrations of happy animals and farmers in natural settings compose the iconic murals on the walls surrounding the Farmer John slaughterhouse. The bucolic agrarian façade belies the gruesome reality inside. I welcome the news that Farmer John, now owned by Smithfield, a subsidiary of an international conglomerate, is closing, but I'm also concerned that this news fits a larger, disturbing pattern. Smithfield says Farmer John is closing because they can raise and kill pigs more cheaply outside of California, which means the company will still be able to mistreat animals and workers, to pollute the environment, and to squander increasingly scarce natural resources.



For decades, factory farms and slaughterhouses have externalized costs, while exploiting and hurting less-fortunate members of society. During the COVID pandemic, for example, slaughterhouse workers were forced into dangerous conditions, succumbing to high rates of infection and disease, while agribusiness corporations were not held liable. With disruptions in the slaughtering schedule, animals backed up in the system and millions were killed by "ventilation shutdown." This involves blocking vents and turning up the heat, which results in excruciating suffering and death by heatstroke over the course of hours. This egregious practice was approved by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the industry was reimbursed for their "losses."

Animals, people and the earth are suffering and dying at the hands of a cruel and extractive industry that has actively sought to conceal its misdeeds, including by passing "ag gag" laws to prevent investigations and public discourse about its irresponsible and inhumane practices. Despite this, there is a growing awareness about the unacceptable abuse endured by animals on factory farms, and 14 states, including California, have passed laws to lessen animal suffering. In 2018, California voters overwhelmingly passed a ballot measure to limit extreme confinement and to require that pigs, chickens and calves have at least enough space to stand up, lie down, turn around, and stretch their limbs. Still, agricultural operations in California and across the U.S. are not adequately covered by humane, environmental, labor, antitrust and other regulations.

Agribusiness has wielded undue political influence to exempt itself from laws

that protect the common good, as well as to garner preferential access to water and other scarce resources, and they also get billions of dollars from government programs every year. Industrial agriculture is destroying family farms and consolidating wealth into fewer hands at the expense of society at large.

The closure of Farmer John's Vernon facility is typical of how smaller businesses are acquired by multinational corporations who cut corners to maximize profits. Agribusiness needs to be held accountable for the harm it causes, and it should not receive public funding for destructive practices, but until this happens, citizens can make a difference by "voting with our dollars" and avoiding factory-farmed products. Our food choices have profound impacts, and while many things are beyond our control, many of us have intentions to eat more mindfully.

California is the nation's largest agricultural state, and the top grower of organic food. Consumers can eat healthy fruits, vegetables and other produce, while also supporting responsible farmers within the state. California also is the country's most populous state, and this presents significant markets and opportunities for farmers and businesses. It's positive to see efforts underway to find new jobs for people working at Farmer John, but instead of helping to move people to other states to kill animals at industrial slaughterhouses, I hope there is a major effort to support jobs and businesses in California that grow foods in a more just and sustainable way. The only constant is change, and with change comes opportunity.

Gene Baur is president and cofounder of Farm Sanctuary, America's first farm animal sanctuary and advocacy organization. [E]



The Cheech interior

THE CHEECH IS A JEWEL IN THE SOCAL CULTURE CROWN

A bastion of equity for Chicano art history opens in Riverside.

BY SHANA NYS DAMBROT

By now it's widely known that the comedic genius of the stoner pantheon, Cheech Marin, is a dedicated, generous, exceptionally knowledgeable, genuinely passionate collector and champion of Chicano art. But for most of this 40-year enterprise, Cheech's life as an art connoisseur was below the mainstream radar. That changed when the landmark exhibition drawn from his extensive collection, *Chicano Visions: American Painters on the Verge*, toured institutions around the country from 2001-2007. This not only raised Cheech's profile as a collector, but it introduced the richness of Chicano art to a new audience of millions, and perhaps most operationally, it opened institutional eyes to the gaps in their own collections and programs, and to the untapped enthusiasm of these new audiences as well.

The call to institutions right now is to be equitable, and the Riverside Art Museum is particularly energized to build on the potential of that – and their sponsorship of a new permanent museum housing the Cheech Marin collection, as well as their

commitment to academic scholarship, museum practices, and community engagement surrounding it, is the vibrant proof of that. Cheech donated about 550 pieces in all to Riverside Art Museum (RAM) to create the new museum, so at the current rate, it will take about four years to publicly exhibit everything; part one of *Cheech Collects* is now open, and part two arrives in early 2023. In addition to curated rotations showing off the historic permanent collection, The Cheech's program will delve more deeply into the careers of individual artists, for example, Judithe Hernandez, who will have a major retrospective opening in 2024.

As The Cheech opened its doors to well-deserved local and national fanfare this June, we caught up with Marin himself to get a personal perspective. "To my mind, this is the most important American school of painting," Cheech starts by telling *L.A. Weekly*. "And it's continuing its evolution right now."

Looking around the first installation, and knowing you're in Riverside – one of

the largest Latino-majority metro hubs in the region – it is striking how there's so much crossover in the work, not only with threads of art history, but with street culture, murals, public spaces, politics, protests and more, speaking to how the idea of Latinx and Chicano representation in art dovetails with broader social justice issues. Not to say that *Up in Smoke* was political activism per se, but in the decades since those heady times, we've all become more aware of how society's disparate economic and carceral realities play out, and that, too, is part of the story of this collection and this museum.

"Chicano art was always political art," Marin often says. "Not only are these works beautiful and complex, but they also raise visibility for social justice issues, and shape our popular, political, and cultural consciousness."

The 61,420-square-foot center (yes, he makes that 420 joke all the time, even saying it was a sign, a kind of green light, if you will) opened with two major exhibitions. Centrally, Cheech Collects is a multi-part

showcase of Marin's collection, including many iconic pieces by Patssi Valdez, Wayne Alaniz Healy, Frank Romero, Carlos Almaraz, Margaret Garcia, Judithe Hernández, Frank Romero, Sandy Rodriguez, John Valadez, Gilbert "Magú" Luján, and Glugio "Gronk" Nicandro. He donated about 550 pieces, so at this rate to see everything will take a few years – during which time the collection threatens to grow even bigger.

L.A. WEEKLY: *So was it literally everything in your house?*

CHEECH MARIN: Just about!

LAW: *So is your house just empty now? Are you freaking out? Or is it still full?*

CM: Still full – and I'm buying! Really, the thing is, as I look at it, there are still great pieces out there that are being produced by major artists – and then there's a whole new generation.

LAW: *So how did The Cheech come to be?*

CM: There were a number of competing institutions that I was going to start giving pieces to. And I did it once. For the San Diego Museum, I gave them a giant John Valadez piece. And I was wondering how



to proceed with all that, and I looked up and this house was falling out of the sky on me. You know, like the Wizard of Oz. The [Riverside Art Museum] came to me with this proposition because I had done a show at RAM, a show of works on paper, which was the biggest show they'd ever had. This building has been the town library, and they're building the new library now down the street, and so they had to repurpose this building. The City Manager came up with a bright idea – give Cheech the building for the collection in both senses, to house it, and to be a permanent gift to stay here and be exhibited. I didn't understand what they were saying at first – you want me to buy a museum? I'm doing okay, but I don't know if I'm buying-a-museum rich!

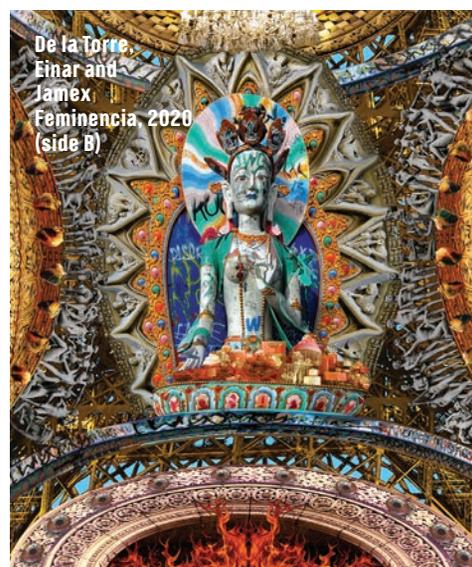
LAW: But it must just be so gratifying to see the evolution of people's attitude towards this aspect of art history. The change moved so fast just in the last decade toward what you've been trying to tell people this whole time.

CM: Well, it was after we started doing

the Chicano Visions tour. That lasted seven years, we had 14 major exhibitions, from the Smithsonian on down. But in the art world it takes repetition, it has to happen over and over again. So we started hanging out with all these museum people and they were like, well, we'll check with you in 20 years. I don't know if I'll still be alive in 20 years! From the time RAM brought the proposition to me to now is a little over five years and according to them, that's warp speed in the museum world.

LAW: So how do decisions get made as to what to show? Is it just figuring out how to exhibit everything eventually, so the permanent collection will change out? Will there be new shows by artists coming through that maybe aren't (yet) part of the core collection? Will there be solo deep-dives into individual artists in your collection? Because I know you never buy just one thing from an artist.

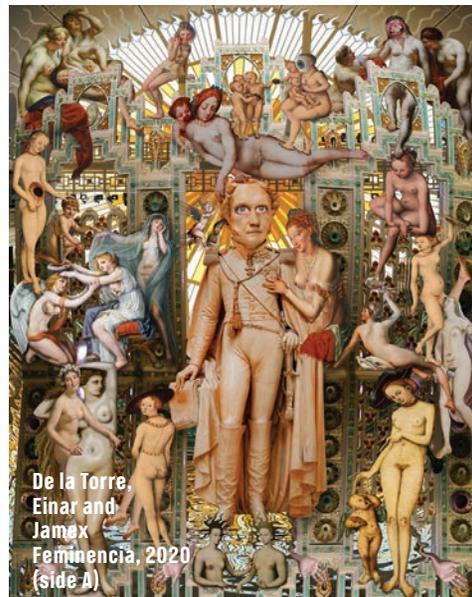
CM: All of the above. This is an introduction to the highlights of the collection. This is the first pull. I gave the museum about 550 pieces, and so the first estimate is that it



De la Torre, Einar and Jamex
Feminencia, 2020
(side B)



De la Torre, Einar and Jamex
El Inmortal, 2010



De la Torre, Einar and Jamex
Feminencia, 2020
(side A)



De la Torre, Einar and Jamex
El Inmortal, 2010



De la Torre, Einar and Jamex
La Belle Epoch,
2002



Carlos Almaraz
Sunset Crash



De la Torre, Einar and Jamex
Critical Mass,
2002



Frank Romero
The Arrest
of the Paleteros



Judithe Hernández Juarez
Quinceanera



Patssi Valdez
Room
on the Verge

would take about five years to roll through all of it... There are about 100 pieces in this room now, actually 90. The first pull was about 130. We started working on that and shrank down because we realized that we're not on any timeline. There's no rush to do this. It's not going anywhere, there's not another show coming in and we have to get out. And yes, generally I do collect in depth everybody I like because they're there and available. That's how I put this collection together, because all the masterpieces of Chicano art were available for purchase when I started collecting.

LAW: So how come the show isn't called *I Told You So*?

CM: It's just my innate modesty! This collection has been displayed in over 50 different museums, that's unheard of for a private collection. But my retort to any hesitancy was always, "Well, I have this

collection, and you don't!" And there was never any answer to that. I'm not part of any academic situation. I don't have a PhD in Chicano Studies ...

LAW: You should! *Dr. Cheech. Dr. The Cheech.*

CM: I could! But you know, in the beginning there was some pushback from within the Chicano community. They were like, well we like you as a comedian. But who is a comedian to tell us what's what about Chicano art? That was never my purpose. I'm trying to get people to see that, and once they start really looking, the whole case changes.

RAM's Artistic Director of The Cheech, Maria Esther Fernandez, concurs. "This is the dream job, I have to say," she tells *Weekly*. "My approach to curation is very much like storytelling, and I really do feel like as curators, we are caretakers."

Fernandez wrote her Master's thesis on curation conceived as, "healing and intervention, especially for communities that are disenfranchised, communities that haven't been able to really fully own their stories and histories and tell them at our institutions." Working collaboratively with Todd Wingate – RAM's director of Exhibitions and Collections – as well as with Marin, the team sat with the works and realized they wanted much more than a checklist of greatest hits. "Really, we were thinking, what's the story that we want to tell and then, of course, what's the story Cheech wants to tell," Fernandez says. "*Cheech Collects* balances the 40-year narrative of Cheech as a collector, with positioning the story of how this collection is art historically important."

The inaugural presentation from the collection reflects deep thought about the

function of Chicano art in the culture, and how historically it was art that candidly and lovingly looked at place, looked to honor and instill cultural pride in the community. Thus, it is of paramount importance to The Cheech folks to have the community members come in and see themselves reflected. "This is a nod to that role that Chicano art had in the movement," says Fernandez. "What Cheech calls 'news from the front,' which is this idea that Chicanos were telling the stories and reporting from their communities, which they continue to do to this day."

Concurrently, *Collidoscope: de la Torre Retro-Perspective* is The Cheech's first temporary exhibition – encompassing almost three decades of work by Einar and Jamex de la Torre, with more than 70 mixed-media works, including blown-glass sculptures, installation art, and ex-

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amples of the Brothers' newest lenticular pieces. The captivating show was curated by Selene Preciado and developed in partnership with the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Latino, and is slated for a national tour after closing on January 22, 2023.

The permanent collection galleries are centered around a massive site-specific two-story lobby installation – a 26-foot-tall lenticular monolith by the de la Torre brothers commissioned for the space. The spectacular backlit piece comes alive with layered optical illusions, hidden images, and a composition that changes as the viewer moves around it. The de la Torres' central image is a monumental Aztec earth goddess carrying an environmentally minded message about "how to save the planet." The Mother Nature figure emerges from lush botanical ground; as viewers move, she dissolves and becomes a cyborg robot made like a Transformer of lowriders. Nestled within the densely detailed textures are regional sights like windmills, solar panels, train tracks, freeways, and desert landscapes full of native plants.

"It's a lenticular process, which the Brothers have been working on for many years," Cheech explains. "I've been following since they started doing it, when it would look like little crackerjack prizes at first, and then they kept doing it and doing

it and doing it, until they broke through. There is a piece up there [part of *Collidoscope* in the second-floor galleries] where they broke through, like wow! It became very dimensional and then I started buying those pieces, and then we commissioned them for this piece. They're the world's recognized authority, I think, in this kind of work; they travel the world and they're getting a big international reputation, which I'm sure will only come to be enhanced. But this is a spectacular piece. A real statement."

To this point, Fernandez and the whole curatorial team want folks to understand that within the conversation these artists were and still are having with modern art, heritage, folk history, and life experience, that they were and are innovators and creators of brand new genre(s). "All art movements are built upon movements that came before. We haven't been able to really unpack the complexity of Chicano art in this way, I believe, in terms of mainstream arts institutions," she adds. "I worked in such an institution for 17 years before I came here; we'd roll this work out every few years, right? This center is going to do that every day."

For more information visit: thecheechcenter.org, and follow their very lively social media team on Twitter @thecheechcenter and Instagram: @thecheechcenter. 📍

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MUSIC

PUNK PIONEER GEZA X DIGS THROUGH THE GARAGE FOR NEW LABEL

BY BRETT CALLWOOD



PHOTO BY DOUG MOORE

Having produced the likes of the Germs, Dead Kennedys, Black Flag, Redd Kross and the Bags, Geza X helped to define the first wave West Coast punk rock sound. As well as fronting his own massively underrated band (Geza X & the Mommy-men), the man was waist-deep in the scene back in the day – helping

to shine a light on some of the bands that we now consider legendary, helping them achieve their potential.

Somebody had to, because the industry did its very best to ignore what was happening right under its nose. Geza recalls an urban myth about a memo from former president Reagan sent to label heads to discourage them from signing

the punk rock bands that would encourage the sort of anarchic sentiments seen in the UK at the time. Whether that's true or not, the labels sure acted as though they'd received it.

"That's when they started pushing dinosaur heavy metal bands," Geza says. "The dice had been cast in the opposite direction. I had the opportunity to record the bands around me. I started off doing live sound, then spread the word that I was a producer. I ended up helping to define the West Coast sound which was more hard-edged than New York at the time, with Patti Smith, television and stuff. I knew that none of these bands would get signed, so I made it a mission to record as many bands as I could, whether or not I'd get paid for it. I loved it. That was my scene."

Later in his career, Geza was asked to remaster the Posh Boy Records catalog, and he discovered a little-known Nuns album, which he had produced many years earlier. Distressed about the fact that the album is great but went ignored, and knowing that the same fate befalls many other bands, Geza had the germ of an idea to start a label of his own – Geza X Records.

"I knew there's no real money in indie labels, especially now," he says. "I'm making \$40 a month to split between 20 different artists. It's sick. It's an embarrassment actually, to our culture. Everybody can put out their own record yeah, but as far as monetizing it, it's worse than the '70s. This has always been a labor of love for me anyway – why don't I just start a label? I have the resources and the connections. I was able to get a really good distribution agent who works through The Orchard, which is basically Sony. I started finding acts I really wanted to put out. Things that I love. The record is set up, it's stable and I've got a few records out. I love every single one of them."

So that's what happened. Geza X Records released EPs by Latin ska band Gabriela Penka and Americana group Stomp Box Holiday, and a single from They Call Us Scoundrels. And then Geza scored the fourth volume of Rodney Bingenheimer's famed Rodney On the Rock compilations.

"That was hard to put together because Rodney didn't want to do it at first," Geza says. "Rodney and I have known each other over the years. He's played records that I've produced on all his

shows. When I approached him to do this record, at first he was very resistant because people have done shows about him that didn't really turn out in his favor. Rodney is such a legend, and he should be treated like a legend. Posh Boy tapped me to try to put together a new Rodney on the Rock compilation for him. He didn't think Rodney would go for it, but maybe I could take a crack at it under Posh Boy Records at the time because I didn't have my label together yet. I said I'd try it out. I clearly explained to Rodney over a period of a few weeks all the reasons that it would be a viable project. It could work, and it could work nicely. He started to agree with me, and then I started listening to his show very regularly. By the way, Rodney's show is as good as it's ever been. He plays garage rock bands from all over the world."

It remains important work. There are 18 songs on the new comp, displaying diversity of styles that fall with the garage rock banner, nine male and nine female bands. Geza says that it's hard to pick favorites.

"We picked them all with love," he says. "There's a really good track by Dogs & Diamonds called 'Mary Manfield.' 'All Night' by Tidal Babes is a fantastic song. We're really pushing that as Top 40 potential. Josie Cotton is there, and so am I. I've got a song called 'Hot-Rod,' which is kind of psychobilly, doo-wop but in the Frank Zappa vein of satire on the style. But a cool song. Having a label gives me opportunities. I'm about to release the Loteria compilation and I have a song on that, too."

Speaking of Geza X's own music, there's going to be a double gatefold re-issue of his classic You Goddam Kids! album though Munster Records.

"[It will have] the original record in one sleeve and then two live shows from the Mabuhay when the whole band was at the top of its game in San Francisco – that's on the other record," he says. "COVID fucked everybody up and the pressing plants were so badly backed up that it takes a year to get your vinyl back."

Geza X has always made it his business to promote garage music, and LA punk, at every opportunity when nobody else will. That's why his label is something to celebrate. The new Rodney on the Rock comp will be awesome, as are new releases from glam punk Robbie Quine. And he has a forthcoming Inside Punk documentary series currently in the editing stage. Geza is quick to shout out the impact of AirPlay Direct in getting independent music to radio stations, because he's cool like that. But his own impact should never, ever be understated.

For more information, visit gezaxrecords.com. **LA**

CANNABIS

CHRISTIE'S HOSTS MASSIVE NFT AUCTION IN SUPPORT OF PSYCHEDELIC MEDICINE

Christie's used the spotlight of NFT.NYC to raise money for the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies.

BY JIMI DEVINE



Baby Eyes



JAKE FRIED (B. 1984)



Christie's Cartography of the Mind online-only auction will donate all proceeds to the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies (MAPS).

Founded in 1986, MAPS has spent the last 35 years as the running back for the psychedelic movement. The nonprofit regularly funded the research and science needed to ram the ball down the field a few feet at a time, getting a first down a couple of times a decade in the process. As psychedelics continue to normalize, MAPS' past and forthcoming work have become more celebrated.

But progress isn't cheap.

In collaboration with the collector Ryan Zurrer, founder of Dialectic and Vine Ventures, Christie's assembled more than two dozen new or recently executed artworks to support MAPS. Noah Davis, Christie's Head of Digital Art, led the effort to collect the works in collaboration with Zurrer. The auction was timed with the NFT.NYC conference, for maximum impact. The bidding ended on June 28 after a week.

Beeple's Pilgrimage was sitting on a six-figure bid two days out from the auction closing; Christie's estimated it could go for as high as \$250,000. Another piece was created by David Choe and MAPS



founder Dr. Rick Doblin. Other artists donating works to the auction include Mad Dog Jones, IX Shells, Sarah Meyohas, Refik Anadol, and many more.

Every dollar raised will be donated to support the research and promotion of potentially life-saving psychedelic therapies led by MAPS.

When announcing his participation on Instagram, Choe noted he's suffered from PTSD and clinical depression for most of his life. He then explained how important the work MAPS does is to him personally.

"It felt like being in a windowless room my whole life with my darkest thoughts and emotions, hearing faint echoes of what normalcy can be on the outside, but having no way to access it until suddenly something not only opens the door, but shatters the entirety of the structure around me," Choe told his followers. "This is what psychedelics were for me. They saved my life. That's why I'm doing this."

Doblin jumped on a call with us to explain how important the auction would be to MAPS moving forward.

"In the entire 36 years of MAPS, we've raised about \$135 million in donations and grants," Doblin said. "But we have needed to raise a large amount of money pretty quickly, in order to start preparing for commercialization. Now that it seems like we have a very good chance of succeeding and making MDMA into medicine accepted by the FDA."

With the new fundraising goals equivalent to half the money the organization had taken in over the years period, Doblin and the gang needed a new approach. Zurrer, who has a psychedelic therapist in his family, was excited to help MAPS with a new approach called regenerative royalty financing.

So after selling all the initial NFTs at Christie's, MAPS will get a cut of the proceeds from future sales, too. Doblin has been pretty astounded by how it's all played out.

"It's just been astonishing," Doblin said, noting nobody said no to Zurrer or Davis as they petitioned artists to join the auction. "Some people put hundreds and hundreds of hours of work into what they donated."

Doblin said the only sad thing about all this was the price of Bitcoin being down.

With how much the psychedelic landscape has changed, we asked Doblin how much he's had to adjust his 10-year plan to account for the rapid progress. He was able to point to the moment he knew it was about to get wild, November 29, 2016.

"That's when we had what's called the end of phase two meeting with the FDA," Doblin said. "So from 2000 to 2016, is when we did a whole series of pilot studies with MDMA for PTSD in Israel, Switzerland, Canada, the United States. And at that point, we presented to the FDA and then they tell us can we go to phase three. And they said yes. So I did think that MAPS would be this far along, but what I didn't think is that this entire field would be 400 for-profit psychedelic companies."

Davis also weighed in the auction with us. He deflected any praise the project has received over to Zurrer. We asked him what it was like to be able to pivot the spotlight of NFT.NYC on to a charitable cause?

"Incredibly cool. You know, anytime I get to do anything charitable at Christie's, it feels special," Davis said. "We've done a few things, charitable sales for NFTs, but this one is just, it's massive, right? And I think it's also incredibly cool that Christie's is getting behind such a potentially taboo organization. There's a lot of stigma around psychedelic treatments for mental illness."

Davis has been running Christie's NFT program since a Beeple NFT went for \$69 million. He'll be departing at the end of the month to be a brand lead for Crypto Punks. [E]



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Hernandez, Autotech Accessories Inc., 21303 Itasca St, Chatsworth, CA 91311. mauricio@avid1wheels.com

Business Development Specialist (Chatsworth, CA) Collect & compare pertinent data on the target mkt to make recommendations. Gather data on competitors & analyze their prices, services, & method of mktg & distribution. Exp reqmts: Bach's deg + 12 months. Interested Applicants, please contact: Mr. Mauricio Hernandez, Autotech Accessories Inc., 21303 Itasca St, Chatsworth, CA 91311. mauricio@avid1wheels.com

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LA WEEKLY CLASSIFIEDS

200 Soto St Los Angeles, CA 90033. This business is conducted by an LLC. The date registrant started to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above: 01/2022.

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