

# LAWEEKLY®

THE BEST PARTIES OF 2023

ART: NEW DOCUMENTARY  
FILMS GIVES CREATIVE MEN  
SOME LOVE

DOVE ARMITAGE IS  
*CONCERNLESS* WHEN IT  
COMES TO GENRES

DECEMBER 22 - 28, 2023 / VOL. 46 / NO. 7 / LAWEEKLY.COM

# Dan Aykroyd

CRACKING THE CREATIVITY CODE

By Michele Stueven

CALENDAR

# GO EDITORS' PICKS

## ARTS

### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21

**theatre dybbuk: The Bond at Philosophical Research Society.** This has been a time of great loss in our world. However, communal acts that give space or structure for processing that loss have been few. In *The Bond*, theatre dybbuk creates a communal ritual in which artists from the company place rocks throughout the facilitated conversation, Death Cafe, along with ceremonial singing. The rock altar will remain, so that all who visit PRS in the weeks that follow can interact with it, and add to it if they are so inspired. *3910 Los Feliz Blvd., Los Feliz; Thursday, December 21, 1:30-4:30pm; free; theatredybbuk.org.*

**Open Fist Theatre Company: A Hard Day's Silent Night at the Broad Stage.** It's The Beatles! It's the story of Christmas! It's both! Come celebrate the holidays with Open Fist's beloved annual Christmas charity concert spectacular. A raucous choir and a swinging live band spread peace and joy, telling the nativity story through effervescent Gospel arrangements of Beatles songs. Proceeds benefit Heart of Los Angeles (HOLA), giving underserved kids an equal chance to succeed through a comprehensive array of after-school academic, arts, athletics and wellness programs. *1310 11th St., Santa Monica; Thursday-Friday, December 21-22; \$25-\$50; openfist.org.*

### FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22

**It's a Wonderful Life at American Cinematheque.** Director Frank Capra's inspiring classic balances pathos and joy in the tale of distraught George Bailey (James Stewart at his finest), who is about to commit suicide on Christmas Eve—until helpful, elderly angel Clarence (Henry Travers) shows him how his death would affect those around him. Featuring Donna Reed as the love of George's life, in the role that launched her to stardom, and a young, charming Gloria Grahame. If you've only seen it on TV, see it now on the big screen, the way it was meant to be seen. *Friday, December 22, 7:30pm, Aero Theater, Santa Monica; Saturday-Sun-*



*day, December 23-24 at Egyptian Theater, Hollywood; also plays Saturday, December 23 at the Warner Grand, San Pedro); \$13; americancinematheque.com.*

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23

**West Hollywood Holiday Poetry Hotline.** Holiday stress doesn't need to get us down when we have poetry to connect us to our shared humanity. Inspired by The Poetry Pharmacy, the West Hollywood Holiday Poetry Hotline is designed and led by WeHo City Poet Laureate Jen Cheng to offer verses and beauty during the sometimes-challenging holiday season. Dial in to the Live Hotline to receive a poem prescription from a live reader, or request a custom poem. *Live Hotline: Saturday, December 23, 2-5pm; Listen to recorded poems 24/7: December 18-31; (310) 853-3952; free; weho.org.*

### L.A. Conservancy's Union Station Walking Tour.

Learn the backstory of L.A.'s iconic and recently restored Union Station. This extraordinary Spanish Colonial Revival and Art Deco monument was built to serve as the gateway to Los Angeles; and it continues to serve tens of thousands of commuters daily. Explore the codes of its architectural motifs, vintage color schemes, public, indoor, outdoor, and hidden spaces—and especially the festive ways it glows up during holiday decoration season. *800 N. Alameda, downtown; Saturday, December 23, 11am-1pm; \$10-\$15; laconservancy.org.*

**Die Hard at the Egyptian Theater.** Bruce Willis plays wise-cracking cop John McClane, an endearing Everyman who becomes an unlikely hero when a group of professional thieves takes his wife's office building hostage. One of the most purely entertaining movies ever made, this fast, funny, and visually elegant thriller set the template for the Hollywood action flicks that followed it and made Willis a movie star. And yes, it's a Christmas movie. *6712 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Saturday, December 23, 7pm; \$15; americancinematheque.com.*

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

**64th Annual L.A. County Holiday Celebration at Dorothy Chandler Pavilion.** Each year Angelenos of all ages gather to experience the dynamic, rich cultures of the county in a diverse and festive lineup of L.A.-based

performing artists. With performances by choral groups, dance troupes, and more the Holiday Celebration brings wholesome cheer into L.A.'s homes and hearts. See the L.A. County Holiday Celebration live in person at The Music Center's Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, or watch it on TV and streaming via [PBS SoCal](https://www.pbs.org/shows/pbs-so-cal/). *135 N. Grand Ave., downtown, Sunday, December 24, 3-6pm; free; musiccenter.org.*

**Elf at the Aero Theater.** Will Ferrell is at his hilarious best as Buddy, a human who has been raised among Santa's elves at the North Pole. All grown up, Buddy causes oversized mayhem in the elves' petite Christmas workshop, so he heads to New York City in search of his real identity. A father-son bonding experience like no other! With James Caan, Bob Newhart as Papa Elf, Mary Steenburgen and Zooey Deschanel. *1328 Montana Ave., Santa Monica; Sunday, December 24, 7:30pm; \$13; americancinematheque.com.*

## MUSIC

### DECEMBER 22-28

#### Margaritas Podridas The Roxy Theatre

Mexico-based shoegaze/grunge/punk rockers Margaritas Podridas signed to Hopeless Records last month, and swiftly released the "Tortilla" single. "The quartet, fronted by Carolina Enriquez, has been steadily rising to punk rock stardom, grabbing attention left and right with their raucous anthems of rebellion and statement-making stage presence," reads a recent press release. "The Hermosillo, Mexico-based quartet Margaritas Podridas was born out of admiration for the underground rock landscape of the '90s, culling from the distortion-laden songwriting of the grunge scene, the scuzz-coated pop of shoegaze, and the noisy sojourns of that decade's college rock's guitar icons." There aren't a ton of shows this week, but this lot at the Roxy will be a treat. Glixen, Alex Vile, and Quinn the Brain also perform. *8 p.m. on Friday, December 22 at the Roxy Theatre, \$18.50, theory.com.*

#### Cannons Troubadour

Having just performed at the Forum on KROQ's Almost Acoustic Christmas bill, Cannons are now fully warmed up for this Troubadour show. Michelle Joy and the boys massaged the crowd through an eight song set that was simultaneously hypnotic and energizing," we wrote of that Forum show. "Hurricane" and "Bright Lights" were highlights, but there were no lowlights." Their latest album is *Heartbeat Highway* and, on its release, Joy said, "The highway of life starts and ends with the most beautiful music in the world, a heartbeat. It's a rhythm so strong the only right thing to do is to follow it wherever it may lead." Truer words have never been spoken. Valida also performs. *7 p.m. on Friday, December 22 at the Troubadour, sold out, troubadour.com.*

#### Fear Alex's Bar

Two Christmas nights for L.A. punk vets Fear at glorious Long Beach venue Alex's Bar. Back in March 2018, when we spoke to frontman Lee Ving prior to Fear's appearance at the MusINK festival, he told us: "I always have an eye and ear to the ground for the music here in our hometown, and I think that it's made measurable progress since the old days when it was not welcome everywhere, and shows of that nature were harder to place. But it's come full circle, and that music in general is part of the way that punk rock is much more accepted than it used to be. It was an item of its own, and I think it's absolutely more mainstream now, and popular among lots and lots of people. It's good for everybody." CH3, Hardship Anchors, Spider (Friday), Slaughterhouse, the Rails, and the Sleeperz (Saturday) also perform. *8 p.m. on Friday, December 22 and Saturday, December 23 at Alex's Bar, \$45.07, alexsbar.com*

#### Pretty Boy Floyd Whisky A Go Go

Through unkind, cynical eyes, Pretty Boy Floyd might always be viewed as the also-rans of the Hollywood sleaze rock scene. Their debut album, *Leather Boyz with Electric Toyz*, wasn't released until '89, when the whole hair movement was in the process of winding down, and while the "Rock and Roll (Is Gonna Set the Night on Fire)" single remains a crowd favorite, they didn't have any major hits. But here's the thing — it takes more than a few chartbusters to create a valid scene. PBF have a few full lengthers jam-packed with quality, anthemic hard rock, and they continue to work their butts off. This show celebrates their 30th anniversary, and they sure deserve a party. TangeiT, Ten Cent Revenge, Villa Nova, Civil Strife, Red Vinyl Gypsies, and Morrigan also perform. *6 p.m. on Thursday, December 28 at the Whisky A Go Go, \$20, whiskyagogo.com.com.* [A]

# FREEWAYS SHUT DOWN AS PROTESTERS CALL FOR A CEASE-FIRE IN GAZA

Protesters took to the roadways, creating human walls that caused standstill traffic in one of the busiest commuter routes in L.A.

BY ISAI ROCHA



As part of continual protests against the Israel-Hamas war, the 110 Freeway in Los Angeles was blocked twice in one week. On Wednesday morning, Dec. 13, dozens of protesters created a human wall across the southbound side of the 110 Freeway, stopping traffic flow for more than an hour.

The protesters placed signs on the road and linked arms, with a sea of stopped cars behind them, causing deadlock traffic not only on the 110 Freeway, but into the 5 Freeway, as well.

Videos showed frustrated motorists getting involved in physical altercations

with the protesters until the California Highway Patrol (CHP) arrived to make arrests.

A total of 75 arrests were made with zip ties instead of handcuffs, and CHP saying there were no further incidents after their arrival.

The group called “If Not Now L.A.” organized the protest, wearing matching shirts that read “Jews say cease-fire now” and signs that read “There is no military solution.”

“As American Jews, we refuse to be silent,” the protesting group said in a statement. “We demand an end to the financial support of Israel’s occupation

and documented war crimes, including the indiscriminate mass murder of over 18,000 Palestinians and the forced displacement of 1.9 million civilians.”

A similar protest occurred in San Francisco on Nov. 16, as protesters blocked off the Bay Bridge, with the county’s district attorney’s office charging 80 of them with misdemeanors.

A different organized group of protesters made its way to multiple Los Angeles fundraiser locations when President Joe Biden toured the city on Dec. 9.

The groups have regularly organized rallies since the Oct. 7 Hamas Attack in Israel led to multiple military strikes and operations in the Gaza Strip.

Nearly 2 million Palestinians have fled their homes and made their way to the southernmost parts of the Gaza Strip.

## Los Angeles Makes ‘Al Fresco’ Dining Permanent

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the city of Los Angeles pivoted to an ‘Al Fresco’ form of outdoor dining, which officials have now made a permanent fixture.

The outdoor dining areas on private lots were a workaround to state regulations that did not allow for indoor dining, due to the increased risk of the spread of COVID-19. Sit-down restaurants were left with few options for service, often opting for carry-out and delivery services once the restrictions lessened. With COVID-19 emergency orders expiring, the original orders that allowed outdoor dining were also set to expire.

The Los Angeles City Council passed the new ordinance on Dec. 15 that will amend zoning codes to allow restaurants to provide outdoor dining options on private property.

“Today’s approval of the Al Fresco Dining Ordinance continues our work to ensure that Los Angeles is not just open for business but that we are advocating for businesses,” Los Angeles Mayor Karen

Bass said in a statement. “The permanent Al Fresco Dining Ordinance carries forward the spirit of the widely successful pandemic-era temporary program and makes sure the process for permanent Al Fresco is simple and easy to navigate for our restaurants. Together, we are finding better ways to support small businesses, create jobs and add vibrancy to our neighborhoods.”

Restaurants that choose to incorporate the outdoor dining experience do not planning approvals, but will need permits from the Dept. of Building and Safety.

“This is a big win for restaurants and the public,” City Council President Pro

Tem Marqueece Harris-Dawson said in a statement. “The permanent Al Fresco dining ordinance will help support mom-and-pop restaurants, create a cultural shift in how public spaces are used in L.A. and demonstrate the best practices for City government working efficiently to serve the people.”

## SoFi Stadium Wins Bid To Host 2027 Super Bowl

In 2027, SoFi Stadium in Inglewood will once again host the NFL Super Bowl, just five years after hosting its first.

The fairly new stadium made its grand opening in 2021, becoming the official home of both the Los Angeles Rams and Chargers and the very next year, it hosted its first Super Bowl game.

The 2022 Super Bowl featured the Los Angeles Rams, who beat the Cincinnati Bengals 23-20, bringing the city of L.A. its first Super Bowl victory.

“We are very excited to bring the Super Bowl back to Los Angeles for the second time in five years,” NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell said in a statement. “The city did an outstanding job hosting Super Bowl 56 in the incredible SoFi Stadium and we believe that Super Bowl 61 will be even more memorable.”

The 2022 Super Bowl game saw an attendance of 70,048 and a TV viewership of more than 112 million. In 2024, the city of Las Vegas will host the Super Bowl and the following two will be hosted in New Orleans and San Francisco, before its return to L.A.

## Hunter Biden To Be Arraigned In Los Angeles

Hunter Biden, son of U.S. President Joe Biden, will be arraigned in a Los Angeles Superior Court on Jan. 11, 2024.

Biden faces three felony charges and six misdemeanor counts, related to allegedly filing a false tax return, tax evasion, failure to file and failure to pay from 2016 to 2019. The indictment alleges the president’s son spent millions of dollars on escorts, drugs, cars and various other personal purchases.

On Dec. 13, Biden spoke in front of the U.S. Capitol, in lieu of a closed-door deposition requested by Republican leaders in the House of Representatives.

“I’m here today to make sure that the House committees’ illegitimate investigations of my family do not proceed on distortions, manipulated evidence and lies,” Biden said. “For six years, I have been the target of an unrelenting Trump attack machine shouting, ‘Where’s Hunter?’ Well, here’s my answer. I am here.”

Biden continued, saying the president was not involved in any of his business dealings, local or abroad.

If found guilty on all charges, Biden faces up to 17 years in prison. [E]



## FOOD

## SMÖGEN APPETIZERS AT VINTAGE WINE + EATS IS BLOWING THE LID OFF THE TRADITIONAL BAGEL

BY MICHELE STUEVEN

It's only been six weekends as a pop-up at Vintage Wine + Eats in Studio City and the locals are already lining up on Ventura Boulevard for the fresh and colorful Swedish-style open-faced sandwiches from Smögen Appetizers that are a fish lover's dream. These San Fernando halves rival any of the hipster bagel joints on the West Side.

Zach Werner's unique concept offers an upscale spin on the traditional bagel and

smoked fish offering in a cozy wine bar packed with families on the weekend that also features an internationally diverse champagne and wine list.

Made in the Tex Mex kitchen of El Tejano, the foundation of Werner's naturally leavened sourdough is a bagel that undergoes a 25-hour process to create an airy and crispy anchor for the colorful toppings that reflect Werner's Miami background and wife Monica Glass' Colom-

bian roots. Vintage Wine + Eats owner Joe Barker opens his wine bar to the Werners on weekends and provides them with the kitchen space at his restaurants, which include the Tippy Cow and Thirsty Merchants, to create their permanent pop-up products.

The signature Smögen is a brilliant orange layer of Black Pearl smoked trout roe on plain cream cheese with fresh dill, that provides a luxurious but subtle burst in every bite. The Joint Venture is Smögen whitefish salad with the nearby Joint Seafood's smoked dry-aged kanpachi collar on plain cream cheese topped with crunchy bright green wasabi-infused flying fish tobiko roe.

The pillowy salmon mousse soft scramble is topped with trout roe and chives, and Eleanor's Heirloom is sort of a Jewish pan de tomate with grated heirloom tomato, olive oil, flaky salt and red pepper flakes. Zoey's Poke is the exclusive creation of Werner's daughter, with piles of purple ahi poke and scallion cream cheese

on a furikake bagel. For anchovy lovers, there's the Sicilian with tomato spread that pairs well with a salty white wine.

The concept gets its name from a fishing village in Sweden where Werner's grandmother Eleanore came from. Her ancestors smoked fish for hundreds of years and brought that culture and technique with them when they immigrated to America, smoking trout in the cornfields of Iowa. Sunday mornings were spent with Eleanore telling stories in Miami Beach, where Werner grew up eating bagels and smoked fish from The Rascal House.

His career as a TV and film producer known for 48 Hours and Big Easy Justice brought him to the San Fernando Valley and got the attention of Barker over a little league baseball game and the love of smear.

Smögen Appetizers is open Saturdays and Sundays from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m., and also features wine and champagne pairings with its sommelier. [A]



CANNABIS

# THE CANNABIS INDUSTRY SAW SOME RELIEF IN 2023

After A Hard Few Years, 2023 Didn't Completely Suck

BY JIMI DEVINE

It's a lot easier for the cannabis industry to look back on 2023 than it had been the past few years prior.

It almost seemed like after that week in March 2020 when the industry sold the most pot ever, we entered a bit of a rut. The license struggles of various hitters and the price crash leading to a lot of small farms going under were two major parts of that sad reality.

But for those who made it to 2023, there was more hope and positives to take away from the year. That being said, it wasn't

perfect. I'm not convinced you all have live soil all of a sudden. But here are a few takeaways we did enjoy.

### The Survivors Kept Surviving

At certain points during 2021 and 2022, it felt like I heard a story about another company going under almost on a weekly basis. After that great culling, on both sides of the market seemingly, legal and not, most of the ones left standing are monsters of the game or at least still have a few good hooks. Regardless, we're thank-

ful they exist and believe they've made it through most of the worst the industry had to offer.

### Prices Bounced

One of the things helping those survivors was the price bounce we saw in 2023. The year prior saw some garbage numbers. Sure the mountain top hype could always convince a rapper or eleven to pay \$4,000 a pound, but for most, it got depressing for a bit there. I talked to one world champ that was getting \$700 for his deps a couple of years back and all I could think was, if he was getting that price, what the hell was everyone else supposed to do? While the numbers aren't back to the Golden Age of Prop 215, they are a lot more functional.

### Solid Weather

California saw over 4 million acres burn in 2020; 2.5 million more would burn a year later. That would cap the end of a vicious run of fire seasons faced by the cannabis industry since the Mendocino Complex fire devastated it in 2018. Thanks to a wet winter, only 300,000 acres burned in California this year and its impact on the industry was a lot more compartmentalized than when the sky turned orange for a week. That weed sucked. But this year did not. You can now smoke the results of the great weather NorCal got this year with

the harvest starting to hit that sweet spot in the cure.

### More Markets Coming Online

More markets coming online is great for California. Farmers took a real hit from places like Oklahoma and Maine coming online and eating up the East Coast trap scene. But the world wants California weed thankfully, and eventually, it will have legal access to the real deal. But the big dogs can only scale up so far and maintain the quality of their product. The supply and demand will drive prices higher. Demand abroad will force customers to pay a premium to smoke it at home. This all isn't a fantasy anymore, it's a countdown.

### Federal Progress

But the countdown clock has not been set. It's just red and blinking flashing lights, but we're definitely on the cusp of something here. Legislation takes a long time to move through Congress, just convincing Congress to not let the DEA spend money raiding sick people took years. But we saw progress this year — who could have imagined the Senate Majority leader would take the legalization cause under his wing? But that's the time we're living in: 2024 will be another massive year for cannabis on the hill. 🍀



# DAN AYKROYD

Cracking The Creativity Code

BY MICHELE STUEVEN

**I**t was in the gonzo-era of the '70s that we first came to know a skinny young comedian from Canada by the name of Dan Aykroyd. It was the golden age of standup comedy, when nothing was taboo. Everybody and everything was

fair game. If we weren't at an underground comedy club watching Robin Williams go off the rails, we were getting high around the record player, listening to Steve Martin *Get Small* on vinyl.

The Second City improvisation com-

edy troupe brought its talents from both its original Chicago and its Toronto companies together with L.A.'s the Groundlings in 1975 and provided many of the performers who made up the Saturday Night Live ensemble. It included Aykroyd, Chevy Chase, Laraine Newman, Garrett Morris and other Not Ready for Primetime Players that have since passed on to the great Friar's Club in the sky, like Gilda Radner and John Belushi. The show, whose first host was standup royalty George Carlin, forever changed the landscape of comedy and late night television.

"Saturday Night Live has been consistent with cultural iconography from

then until now," Aykroyd recently told L.A. Weekly over card tricks at the Magic Castle. "They're still doing a great job. The writers and the cast are strong. It's as vibrant and as relevant as ever."

One of Aykroyd's most classic and defiant skits at the time that has gone down in SNL history, was taking on the holiness of culinary goddess Julia Child in the hysterical French Chef episode. It involved lots of liver and a kitchen knife wound resulting in a fountain of gushing blood that was orchestrated by comedian and former Minnesota senator Al Franken from underneath the table.

"Everybody loved Julia Child and she was a phenomenon at the time," says



Aykroyd. “They wrote that and I looked at it thinking it was just a cheap blood joke. But I did it and looked just like my mother when I was doing it. But everybody loved it, including Julia. My aunt was Helene Gougeon, a culinary writer and food columnist in Montreal. She had her own radio show, cooking show and a shop that brought the first cuisinart to Canada and she knew Julia very well. It was a beautiful connection.”

But as a creative force, the award-winning writer, producer and actor says that comedy is a serious business that has its own pros and cons.

“Comedy is one of the most creative arts,” he says. “The pros are that you get instant gratification and creative fulfillment from a laugh and satisfaction from an audience. The cons are you are completely rejected on a lot of projects and you have to claw your way back to the top from the bottom every time. I’ve had scripts and ideas rejected and concepts I pitched to directors during a movie that have been shut down, as well as scenes at SNL that didn’t work — many, many times. Being in a creative field, not everybody is going to love what you’re

doing at all times and you have to take those risks. But they are healthy risks to take.”

Forty years ago he took a risk that paid off in spades, when he teamed up as actor and screenwriter with fellow SNL alumnus Bill Murray along with Harold Ramis, Rick Moranis, Ernie Hudson and Annie Potts in Ghostbusters. To celebrate the anniversary, Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire, will come out exclusively in theaters on March 29, 2024 with Aykroyd, Murray, Potts and Hudson returning to the franchise. They will be joined by People’s Sexiest Man Alive Paul Rudd.

The sequel will continue the Spengler family’s story and bring the series back to familiar locations. It will see the team facing their biggest challenge yet, when New York City suddenly gets plunged into a new ice age as a supernatural artifact unleashes the “death chill,” which has the power to literally frighten people to a frigid death.

When he’s not busting ghosts or unearthing The Unbelievable in a new non-fiction series on the History Channel, the seemingly ageless Aykroyd’s truest passion when it comes to spirits is Crystal



Head Vodka, which he co-founded in 2008 with John Alexander, a renowned American artist and the designer of the liquor’s unique skull bottle.

The brand routinely partners with artists and encourages the community to express creativity in new mediums, most recently with American graffiti artist Risk Rock, and 50 other renowned creatives around the world to paint bottles donated by Crystal Head Vodka. The one-of-a-kind personalized bottles were on display at a recent event hosted by Aykroyd at the legendary Magic Castle in Hollywood, as well as at Rock’s Compound Contemporary gallery in Thousand Oaks.

Once again a pioneer in a liquor landscape littered with celebrity names, Aykroyd was the first to set up the company that originally imported Patron tequila into Canada. It was his love for tequila that inspired him to create Onyx, a unique agave-based vodka.

“Dan Aykroyd was one of the original celebrities who started a liquor brand,” entertaining expert and co-host of the event Paul Zahn told L.A. Weekly. “Something that is great about Dan is he is very serious about the quality of his Crystal Head Vodka and its different line extensions, but also has a sense of humor about the booze business. Exactly what one would expect from a comic legend with an enterprising side.”

Crystal Head Vodka uses water from Newfoundland, Canada, to create a pure, additive-free, ultra-premium vodka. It is filtered through layers of Herkimer Diamonds and is made from locally sourced Canadian corn, Aurora, crafted from English wheat, and Onyx, crafted with Blue Weber Agave sourced from a single farm in Mexico and is sold in more than 75 countries around the world.

“Bar chefs love us all over the world and enjoy working with our virgin product as a canvas for their creations,” says

Aykroyd, whose current favorite LA bar is Mama Shelter. “We figured the best thing to sell was pure, unadulterated vodka with no added oils in a vessel like the skull, which is associated with the legends of powers of positivity in the Navajo, Aztec and Mayan communities. The bottles come in black, clear, mirrored, spatter/rainbow for Pride Month in June and an upcoming vessel in cobalt blue.

“When you start with nothing, you have to be creative or you’ll end up with nothing,” said Aykroyd while sipping on a paloma in the hallowed halls of the Magic Castle.

In the celebration of spirits and 40 years of Ghostbusters, Crystal Head Vodka shared its cocktail recipes for Stay Puft and Slimer’s Revenge with us:

#### Stay Puft

2 oz. / 60 ml Crystal Head Vodka  
1 tsp / 5 ml Marshmallow Syrup  
4 Scoops of Vanilla Ice Cream  
1 Marshmallow  
Sprinkle of Sea Salt

#### Directions:

Combine all the ingredients in a blender and blend. Pour into a glass. Garnish with a marshmallow and a sprinkle of sea salt.

#### Slimer’s Revenge

2 oz. / 60 ml Crystal Head Onyx  
1 1/2 oz. / 44 ml Pineapple Juice  
3/4 oz. / 22 ml Lemon Juice  
3/4 oz. / 22 ml Honey Simple Syrup  
1 tsp. / 5 ml Matcha Powder  
Fresh Mint Sprig

#### Directions:

Combine all the ingredients into a cocktail shaker with ice and shake. Strain over ice in a Collins glass. Garnish with a fresh mint sprig. 🍸

Having wandered into the Silverlake Lounge recently and caught a short but intensely enjoyable set from Dove Armitage, it was clear that this is an artist that needs to be firmly on our radar.

That set was representative of her career so far; while some musicians find their style and rigidly stick to it, only varying their course as much as the accepted genre boundaries allow, Armitage seems to take great joy in bouncing from one thing to another. It all sounds very her, it's not forced. But this is an artist who makes her own rules, and that's to her immense benefit.

It all began for Armitage in 2016, when she started to teach herself to play bass and sing.

"I started a band around that time called Cat Scan," she says, via a Zoom call. "It was like this kinda post punk band akin to the Cardiacs or Devo. That band got some traction and then it started to get serious where I was like, I want to make my own music and learn how to produce, and take it to this next step beyond needing to rely on other people to write. That happened in 2018-2019, then in 2020 I was able to learn how to produce and spent the whole pandemic doing that basically."

Having wisely used the lockdown time to teach herself the art of self-production, Armitage felt like she had the knowledge and creative freedom to go it alone. While she sits somewhere on the alt-pop spectrum, her solo sound, she correctly points out, is genre-less and uninhibited.

"It evolved over the years - it kinda started as an ambient project," she says. "I wanted to make pretty strictly ambient music, but that turned into making a few dark wave-y tracks. But ambient music was always the goal. I've been doing that for many years of my life. I love writing and that's my favorite thing to do, and I like playing with words. I wanted to have more lyrics, and melody incorporated in music, so I was like, I should insert this pop element that I've always been curious about but I also missed being in a rock band with the Cat Scan energy. I miss playing bass a lot - that's one of my favorite instruments to play live. I wanted to write kinda how I used to write, merging these two new ways of writing. I wanted to bring in all of my music history per se, for this new sound."

As well as her own band Cat Scan, Armitage has played bass with some heavy hitters, including the Death Valley Girls and Yungblud.

"(Death Valley Girls) was super fun," she says. "It was actually about six months. It was short-lived, but really impactful. They're the best people, and super fun to play with. Everyone I've played with has been wonderful. I did Jimmy

Kimmel last year with (Yungblud). He's a wild one but he's very fun."

Right now, between her own shows, Armitage is on tour playing bass with Royal + the Serpent.

"It's definitely buzzing, and every crowd we've played so far has grown and grown and grown," she says. "Royal's been so

fucking fun to play with."

That's all great - it's important to be busy. But we're here to talk about Armitage's own music and, at the time of the interview, her *Concernless* EP was about to drop.

"I'm super excited," she says. "It feels like the feeling that I imagine women

MUSIC

# SUBSTANCE OVER STYLE

Dove Armitage is *Concernless* when it comes to genres

BY BRETT CALLWOOD



feel when they're about to have a baby and you've been pregnant for too long. That's the energy it's been feeling like lately. Like, I just want to give birth to it already."

Armitage worked on *Concernless* with some respected peeps around town, including Chris Greatti and Liam Hall (aka atgrandma).

"Me and Liam were talking, and we were just late-night sharing influences one day and he was like, 'Oh, we should do a session.' I was like, 'That would be amazing, fuck yeah.' We went in without any expectation of making a full body of work," she says. "I just loved his production style and he liked mine. So we just intended to jam and see what happened. Within five hours we made the track 'Brittle,' almost to completion. Me and Chris went in and we made 'It Won't Die.' Then we made another song, so we made 'Pop' and 'In Chaos.' Me and Liam got back in and made 'Glass in Me.' It just was so fun to work with these two, and it felt so effortless and easy, and all three of us combining what we were best at just created this perfect balance and I think just our attitude going into it to, of we're not trying to make a rock record, or a pop record, or cater to Tik-Tok virality. We're just gonna make good songs that we like to make and feel good about."

That's the joy of the EP, and Armitage's music as a whole - her willingness and freedom to experiment with glorious abandon. The song is the important thing, although some themes did crop up.

"I started writing a lot about juxtaposition or contradictions in feelings sometimes," Armitage says. "How two seemingly contradicting feelings could exist at the same time. How things that are good for you could be actually really bad for you, and things that feel not great could be good for you. I was exploring these themes of entropy and organized chaos. Finding contentment within, kind of an uncontrollable chaos that we just live in with this world, and that became the overarching theme of the EP."

This city made its way into the way into the music, too - Armitage having moved here from Austin, TX, as a child.

"Every city has its issues, but I think Hollywood is hysterical," she says. "The history of L.A. definitely found its way in with its eclectic, wackiness. It's haunted as fuck, L.A. That ghostly energy found its way in as well."

Armitage will stay busy in the coming months, performing her own music, playing bass with other bands, and doing the occasional DJ set, too. She's one to keep an eye on, but with a work ethic like hers, you won't have to look hard.

*Dove Armitage's Concernless EP is out now.* [X]



# THE BEST PARTIES OF 2023

No Matter What Kind Of Music You Were Into, This Year There Was A Dance Floor With Your Name On It.

MARK STEFANOS



“We’ve lost dancing,” Fred again.. with the Blessed Madonna mourned during the pandemic.

Well, if we lost dancing from 2020 to 2021, and 2022 was a rebuilding year, 2023 was a dance floor renaissance. It was the year dancing won.

The best parties this year all had a few things in common — anyone could go, they weren’t too pricey and the music and dancing were bar-none. And it’s what they didn’t have that set them apart — stuck up patrons, bouncers at the door side-eyeing your fit or a host trying to sucker you into buying a bottle.

If you’re looking to dance in LA, your pound-for-pound best option is a DJ party. Broadly speaking, DJ parties are recurring, themed music events. Unlike concerts, the DJ party’s center isn’t the stage, it’s on the dance floor.

The event producers and DJs that conceived these parties are true believers that all told us the same thing: they built parties that were focused on music, dancing and fun, without the headache and pretentiousness of scene-obsessed nightlife.

They were wildly successful at. So without further ado, here are the best parties of 2023.

## Junkyard Jouvert by Foreigner

With paint raining, ass shaking and booming music til the crack of dawn, *Junkyard Jouvert* is a party that has to be experienced to be believed.

The multi-talented Adam Cooper, who goes by his DJ name *Foreigner*, brings *Jouvert* — a paint-infused celebration that marks the start of Carnival — from his birthplace Trinidad and Tobago to his new home in LA.

“On the surface, *Junkyard Jouvert* is about providing LA with the wildest Caribbean paint party experience they could ever imagine,” *Foreigner* said. “Your outfit doesn’t matter, your hairdo doesn’t matter, your dancing skills don’t matter, there’s no body shaming or judgment on whether you’re of Caribbean descent.”

In 2023 we learned that between *Junkyard Jouvert* and *Roadblock* (another party Cooper throws with dancing on junk cars to emulate a Caribbean street fest) you haven’t truly partied until you’ve partied with *Foreigner*.

Find all of *Foreigner’s* parties at [instagram.com/foreignerrrrr](https://www.instagram.com/foreignerrrrr).

## Habibi’s House by DJ Habibeats

From a soft launch at Melrose House last year to selling out Academy this August, Ibrahim Abu-Ali, better known as

*DJ Habibeats*, has created something we haven’t seen in as long as we can remember — a massive celebration of Middle Eastern-infused world music. With his dance-beat remixes of Arabic classics, special guests and massive *dabke* lines, *Habibi’s House* also happens to be one of the very best parties in LA.

The Palestinian-American DJ tells us his aim is to normalize underrepresented music — “I would like to see Arabic music be just as normal in a club or on the radio as the way we hear reggaeton music from Latin America.”

After a sold-out run in LA to start the year, *DJ Habibeats* took his show on the road, hitting dates across the country on a *Habibi’s House* tour. We’re looking forward to him coming back to LA in 2024.

See where *Habibi’s House* will be next at [instagram.com/djhabibeats](https://www.instagram.com/djhabibeats).

## Electric Feels by Jeremy Burke of Loud Village

*Electric Feels* is an indie-music dance party created by Loud Village, a powerhouse production company led by Jeremy Burke.

Starting in 2017, the party has blossomed into a monthly pilgrimage for Angelenos looking to rock out.

“I moved to LA in 2006 when the type of music we play at *Electric Feels* was everything. I feel like the love for that music never really went away with most people. Starting the party just made too much sense,” says Burke.

*Electric Feels* takes the best qualities of parties like *Dance Yourself Clean* and adds top DJs and production value, making it a night of high-energy music nostalgia and body grooving while scream-yelling the words to your favorite chorus.

While *Electric Feels* has become a full-time touring operation, hitting 48 cities so far, you can still catch it at the Echoplex the last Saturday of every month.

Stay up on *Electric Feels* at [instagram.com/electricfeelsparty](https://www.instagram.com/electricfeelsparty).

## Link Up by Andre Power

LA is the perfect place for an outdoor day party. *Link Up* takes the best aspects of that formula and makes it church.

Andre Power, the world-class DJ and co-founder of the music collective Soulection, started *Link Up* as a way to get friends back to socializing after being holed up and isolated during the pandemic.

It turned into a monthly mainstay, most frequently at Second Home — a lush, outdoor co-working space with a large courtyard and wine garden — a dream venue for a sunny party. The DJ lineups are always stellar, and the dance floor is second to none.

“I love making people dance. I love making people move. I love making

people smile and just kind of let loose,” Andre Power tells us.

We look forward to grooving at *Link Up’s* return next year, and look out for the party expanding to cities across the globe.

Find out where to *Link Up* next at [instagram.com/linkup.worldwide](https://www.instagram.com/linkup.worldwide).

## Perreo by David “Mezcal Papi”

This year, we were delighted to find the line at *La Cita*, the downtown institution, down the block — on *Wednesdays*, no less. The wait is worth it, as inside is one of the most consistently fun and perfectly curated parties we’ve danced our asses off at.

*Perreo*, the brainchild of musician and event producer David “Mezcal Papi,” started as a monthly night five years ago and is now one of the hottest Latin-music events the city has ever seen.

“One thing I really wanted to do was make *Perreo* an all-inclusive party for everybody — all walks of life — and very down to earth. We don’t do bottle service, so we’re not with that Hollywood stuff. We just want to make it fun, good vibes, and really built for people that want to dance,” David tells us.

As the year closes out, *Perreo* is growing, with a just-introduced *Perreo Rave* for those looking for more electronic Latin vibes.

See what’s happening with *Perreo* at [instagram.com/perreowednesdays](https://www.instagram.com/perreowednesdays).

## Lifetime Achievement Award: 143 by SoSuperSam

No list of parties in LA is complete without a crooning shout-out to *143*. The R&B party, created by Samantha Duenas who goes by the DJ name SoSuperSam, long championed “slow jams, love songs, bed squeaks.”

*143* (pager speak for “I love you”) had its last nighttime party this year, leaving a legion of fans in mourning. It wasn’t just one of the best parties this year, it’s been one of LA’s absolute best parties for the past decade.

Starting in 2013 at Blind Barber in Culver City, *143* grew behind the strength of the delightful Duenas until it was regularly selling out Catch One.

“*143* was about letting your guard down. LA nightlife can sometimes feel uptight and self-conscious, but our party was irreverent. You could wear your best sweatpants, dance your face off, sing really loud, and eat snacks. Anything could happen at *143*,” SoSuperSam explains.

After its decade-long run, *143* has taken on new life as a monthly radio show on NTS, a community driven global station. But you can still catch *143* live with SoSuperSam behind the decks at popups like ComplexCon and night markets.

Find out where *143* will be next on [instagram.com/143worldwide](https://www.instagram.com/143worldwide). 📍

ART

# LET'S BINGE IT FOR THE BOYS

A Spate Of New Documentary Films Gives Creative Men Some Love.

BY SHANA NYS DAMBROT



Artists and writers get the documentary film treatment all the time, and increasingly, that takes the form of unearthing hidden figures in the arts to correct the imbalances of history. But for some reason, in 2023, the spotlight has swung back to illuminate some influential, if enigmatic and mostly white, men who helped shape American and global culture at the turn of the century. New films on painters Anselm Kiefer and Roy Lichtenstein, Light and Space icon Robert Irwin, cultural impresario Michael Chow, and writers Tom Wolfe, Allen Ginsberg, and John Le Carré—all but two of whom are dead—are spicier than the usual hero-worship hagiographies (though with the exception of the Lichtenstein piece, they certainly are that). They each take stylistic liberties, intriguing cinematic risks and poetic turns, corralling A-list interviews, archive access, and in some cases years of vintage and brand new footage and spinning it all into the neatest of documentarian tricks—reviving an old tale to tell a new story.

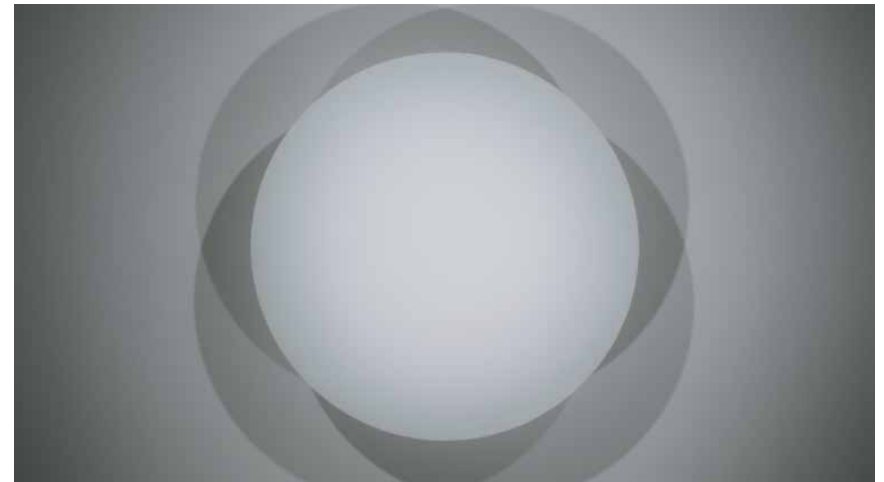
**Anselm, dir. Wim Wenders.**

As much a film by Wim Wenders as a film about Anselm Kiefer, this remarkable study falls more in the category of a

“cinematic experience” than an informational volume—the rare documentary it is very much worth seeing in a theater. Shot in 3D and 6K-resolution, the assertively uncanny visual intensity is a brain-bender—but in Wenders’ hands it also serves the story. Because Kiefer (b. 1945), is himself known for working at an overwhelming scale across years of plans and labor, chasing a sublime transcendence through embracing human heartbreak. Kiefer’s vision involves painting, sculpture, architecture, literature, myth, war, worship—but 50 years in, according to both Wenders and the art world as well as his own ambition, he’s far from finished with his life’s work. *At Laemmle’s Glendale through December 28. wim-wenders.com.*

**Radical Wolfe, dir. Richard Dewey.**

First and foremost a storyteller Tom Wolfe (1930-2018) worked as journalist but his efforts went far beyond expanding the scope of that profession, to touch on popular culture, film, literature, and America’s understanding of its own history, identity, and evolution. Wolfe immersed himself in his stories, going deep in getting to know hippies, astronauts,



stockbrokers, athletes, and poets—with indelible results like *The Right Stuff*, *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, and *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*. Blessed with the voluminous interviews with the loquacious author himself, and augmented by conversations with luminary colleagues, the film excels at contextualizing Wolfe’s innovation within his own milieu, reaching forward to illuminate his legacy for today. *Streaming on Amazon, iTunes, Netflix, etc. kinolorber.com.*

**Robert Irwin: A Desert of Pure Feeling, dir. Jennifer Lane.**

Released both tragically and poetically on the eve of the artist’s death, this bright film on the life and work of California Light and Space artist Robert Irwin (1928-2023) stands as his final message to the world. Since the 1960’s Irwin’s investigations into the nature of perception—and therefore of reality itself—made him a driving force of modern West Coast art. Though a prolific painter, his best-known work has come to be his affecting, ostensibly minimalist objects and installations that force the viewer to define the parameters of their own senses. To encounter an Irwin is to physically feel yourself in the act of seeing—a physiological setup that quickly gives way to a philosophical one. If that sounds too erudite, as the film imparts, remember Irwin labored in the invisible zone of the “artist’s artist” for years, during which time he made money gambling at racetracks and teaching, with students like Chris Burden, Ed Ruscha, Alexis Smith, and Vija Celmins. When he died, he was immersed in his masterpiece—a permanent installation in Marfa, Texas, and this film is now your only chance to get a tour from the man himself. *Streaming on Amazon and Apple TV. greenwichentertainment.com.*

**aka Mr. Chow, dir. Nick Hooker.**

The personal journey of the man born Zhou Yinghua in 1930s Shanghai to become the iconic restaurateur, underrec-

ognized painter, and cultural impresario now known as Mr. Chow fairly begs to be made into a documentary, and honestly it would make an incredible biopic as well. The life of Michael Chow (b. 1939) is the stuff of legends among a certain slice of the sexy art-meets-Hollywood world of Beverly Hills of the 1960s through 80s, as his destination restaurant was the place to be—a kind of Studio 54 in dinner party form. From Old Hollywood to New York Pop, a flashy documentary on the spot’s incredible cast of regulars, cameos, and lookers-on would be satisfying enough—but the wisdom and wonder, the heart and soul, of this film is the entire world of Michael Chow’s that unfurls behind the flash. As the film movingly follows, he was painfully separated from his father—a renowned Beijing opera singer—when he was sent to school in England at 13, thence embarking on a career in acting, painting, and finally dining as well as serious art patronage that was all steeped in remembering his roots while also profoundly reinventing himself. *Streaming on HBO Max. hbo.com.*

**The Pigeon Tunnel, dir. Errol Morris.**

They would bring the big guns when it was time to further unmask the world’s best-known spy. Academy Award-winning documentarian Errol Morris is, in retrospect, more than the clear choice to direct a film that unravels its mysteries like a double helix in which everything and nothing is true. Former British spy David Cornwell (1931-2020) was better known to the world as John le Carré, author of genre-defining spycraft stories (and eventually landmark movies) like *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*, *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*, *The Night Manager*, and *The Constant Gardener*. Like the books, the film moves across decades from the Cold War to today, presenting Cornwell in intimate interviews that turned out to be his last, along with archival and historically framed footage, and Morris’ forte—the dramatic reenact-



ment. Drawing on the author's bestselling memoir *The Pigeon Tunnel: Stories from My Life*, the film also recreates its mood in an original score by Philip Glass. *Streaming on Apple TV. tv.apple.com.*

**The Life and Times of Allen Ginsberg, dir. Jerry Aronson.**

The film's own summary says it best when it claims, "Visionary, radical, spiritual seeker, renowned poet, founding member of a major literary movement, champion of human rights, Buddhist, political activist and teacher—Allen Ginsberg (1926-1997) and his remarkable life shaped the very soul of American counterculture." It's really hard to argue with or improve on that characterization (other than to mention that Ginsberg was also a talented photographer), as the man's own legacy has now proved its worth as it continues to inspire not only a new generation of poets—but even poetry beyond human consciousness. To craft this film Aronson accompanied the poet on 25 years of travels, adventures, misadventures, appearances, creative sessions, downtime, and flirtations with celebrity. The film premiered at the 1993 Sundance Film Festival, but has now been digitally remastered and made available to stream for the first time—and its new Deluxe Two-Disc DVD edition includes a further six hours of never-seen materials and interviews with his friends, family and contemporaries such as Bono,

Johnny Depp, Philip Glass, Ken Kesey, Timothy Leary, Paul McCartney, Yoko Ono, Patti Smith, Andy Warhol and many others. *Streaming everywhere. fir-strunfeatures.com.*

**WHAAM! BLAM! Roy Lichtenstein and the Art of Appropriation, dir. James L. Hussey.**

The one film that's less of a love letter to its subject is this accusatory case-making platform for robust debates about originality, commentary, and authenticity. Roy Lichtenstein (1923-1997) was a foundational figure in the creation of the Pop Art movement of the 1960s along with New York contemporaries like Warhol, Johns, and the rest of the gang. But Lichtenstein's unabashed citations went beyond appropriating the languages of brands, advertising, and commerce and borrowed directly from comic books. The appeal of this cheeky work, its melodramatic deracination from story, the use of analog pixelation referring to both comics' and Pointillism's visual tropes via his signature Ben Day dots—it's clear why audiences would be drawn to its charm, nostalgia, and oomph. But many in the comics world, including and especially the individual artists whose original art Lichtenstein took for his own, refuse the lofty mantle of "appropriation" and call it what they feel it is—plagiarism and theft. In the art and authorship wars, who has the moral high ground? *Now on DVD & VOD. kinolorber.com. [L]*

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# LA WEEKLY CLASSIFIEDS

## EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

**Senior VP of Business Development** (Los Angeles, CA): Design and manage the launch of systems and procedures involved in a new global ad supported video-on demand channel. 20% domestic travel required. Salary: \$185,000/yr. Resumes: HR, Viva Pictures Distribution LLC, 1539 Westwood Blvd., Los Angeles, CA, 90024.

**Producer** (Los Angeles, CA): Produce ADR recordings of animated titles, direct actors' performances, and approve the final cut of movies. 10% domestic travel required. Salary: \$110,000/yr. Resumes: HR, Viva Pictures Distribution LLC, 1539 Westwood Blvd., Los Angeles, CA, 90024.

**Fashion Designer:** Req'd: A.A. in Fashion Design, Design, or rel. \$52,978/yr. Mail Res.: Nicole, Inc. 1133 S. Boyle Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90023

**Fashion Designer.** Req'd: Associate's degree in Fashion Design, Design, or related. Wage: \$52,978/yr. Worksite: Los Angeles, CA 90021. Mail Resumes: K & J Apparel, Inc. 1188 S San Pedro Street #M, Los Angeles, CA 90015

**Chief Technology Architect** Job location Norwalk, CA. Telecommuting is available. Send resume w/this ad to Job Code 2388-CTA, D. Lopez, Lopez & Associates, Inc., 13810 San Antonio Dr, 2/F, Norwalk, CA 90650

Liferay, Inc. seeks **Director, CSTA (Customer Success Technical Architects)** to direct the company's trusted technical advisors for its highly strategic existing business. Travel: Around 33% of domestic/international travel. Salary: \$220,626 per year. Worksite: Diamond Bar, CA and various unanticipated worksites throughout the US. Send resumes by mail to Liferay, Inc., 1400 Montefino Avenue, Suite 100, Diamond Bar, CA 91765.

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## LA WEEKLY Bulletin

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*Thank you Saint Jude, Saint of the Impossible, EC*

## SECURITY GUARDS NEEDED

Rio Gentlemen's Club - 13124 S Figueroa St, Los Angeles, CA 90061 \$18 to \$20 an hour. Outside security needed for patdowns, ID checks and monitoring parking lot of the club. Please contact Dave Carlson at [Rmckinney@jjmfirm.com](mailto:Rmckinney@jjmfirm.com)