

LAWEEKLY

UNBINGED TAKES A LOOK
AT FINAL FAREWELLS OF
LONG-RUNNING SERIES

DANIEL CLOWES'S *MONICA*
GOES TO HELL

WEEED STUFF WE LOVED IN
2023

DECEMBER 29, 2023 - JANUARY 4, 2024 / VOL. 36 / NO. 44
LAWEEKLY.COM

MAKE IT A FLUID NEW YEAR

COCKTAIL RECIPES TO KICK OFF 2024 • BY MICHELE STUEYEN

CALENDAR

GO EDITORS' PICKS

ARTS

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28

Ikebana Workshop with Kyoko Oshiro at Foyer-LA. In the gallery's current project, the beginning of something smaller, Jon Seaton and Courtney Duncan mine the depths of humility with their tactile forms made of steel, cinder cones, sand, scoria, acid, iron oxide grounded in an earthy physicality. Seaton and Duncan share a keen sense and respect for materiality, and space itself is utilized as a material. Both avid outdoors people on a quest for more space, they respond to and collect from the natural world while contemplating their fragile place in it. The Ikebana workshop with Kyoko Oshiro includes selecting a handmade vessel by Courtney Duncan & Jon Seaton. *9070 N. Broadway \$204, Chinatown; Thursday, December 28, 6-7:30pm; \$250; rsvp at foyer-la.com.*

FVC Best Opera Recording: Black Lodge Livestream. Black Lodge is set in a nightmarish Bardo, a place between death and rebirth. The work follows a tormented writer (identified as the "Man") as he confronts demons of his own making, in search of escape. Drawing on the complex mythologies of such artists as William S.



Burroughs and David Lynch, composer David Little's Black Lodge fuses industrial metal and punk with classical string quartet and opera to create something wildly vivid and new. The opera's 78-minute film version was produced during the pandemic by director Michael Joseph McQuilken and Beth Morrison Projects. The artists will present a special holiday (and Grammy nomination celebration) viewing of the full Black Lodge film, streamed live for your consideration. *Thursday, December 28, 6pm; free; youtube.com/davidlittle.*

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31

Grand Park Countdown to 2024 New Year's Eve Party. Two music stages, one with a killer lineup of all-female DJs; Midnight Countdown Art Spectacle projected on L-A's City Hall; Family Activities by PlayLA; Art Installations for an immersive experience; Over 30 of LA's Favorite Food trucks; and Metro is giving free rides for everyone all over the city on New Year's Eve, from 9pm on December 31 to 2am on January 1. *200 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Sunday, December 31, 8pm-12:30am; free; grand-parkla.org.*

MONDAY, JANUARY 1

LACE presents APOLAKI: Opera of the Scorched Earth, now streaming free online. A new experimental opera by Filipino-American composer Micaela Tobin in collaboration with installation designer Carlo Maghirang and dancer/choreographer Jay Carlon, APOLAKI premiered live at the historic and storied Zorthian Ranch earlier this year—and that performance became this film. Continuing her celebration of the pre-colonial mythologies of the Philippines, the work tells the story of Apolaki, the pre-colonial God of Sun and War, who finds themselves lost in a foreign and unfamiliar land (present day Tongva Land/Los Angeles)

after being displaced from the Philippines by Spanish colonizers. This opera is a radical meditation on the complex relationships between settler colonialism, migration, and diaspora, and invites the audience to join Apolaki in this immersive pilgrimage. *Now online at welcometolace.org.*

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3

Meditations with Christiane Wolf in the Wende Museum Garden. Mindfulness is being fully present to your life instead of being on autopilot. Our mind tends to rehash the past and to rehearse the future. There is nothing wrong with that except that it does it too much and it keeps us from being with what is actually happening right in this moment, and we can feel like life is passing us by. Start the year by checking in on the museum's new weekly morning meditation series, whether you are new to meditation or already have experience, or just want to start your day by sitting in the beautiful garden. *10808 Culver Blvd., Culver City; Wednesday, January 3, 9am; free; wende-museum.org.*



MUSIC

DECEMBER 29-JANUARY 4



**ARMNHMR
Exchange LA**

Almost exactly two years prior to this end-of-year bash at Exchange LA, ARMNHMR participated in our “Not Another DJ” column, collectively telling us that, “We’re constantly evolving our palette while maintaining that foundational idea of having melodies being the driving force.” At the time, they had just released the “Saving Lives” single. Of course, their palette has evolved further since then. See for yourself. DZMA, Fixion, and Hidden Axis also perform. *10 p.m. on Friday, December 29 at Exchange LA, \$30-\$90, exchangela.com.*

**310babii
The Roxy Theatre**

Local teen rapper 310babii has had a big year. He put out a few well-received singles, including the quite brilliant “Walk” plus “Soak City,” and 2024 promises to see his journey continue on the upward trajectory that he’s currently enjoying. “After release, his highschool classmates created a dance, put it online, and it went viral organically with over 15K user generated videos on TikTok in 2 months,” reads a press release. I mean, that’s just wonderful ain’t it. John Mackk, Jay Cinco, and Chief Major also perform. *9 p.m. on Saturday, December 30 at the Roxy Theatre, \$20, theroxy.com.*

**OFF!
Alex’s Bar**

What way to welcome in the new year that

in the company of Keith Morris’ madcap hardcore-jazz fusion troupe? Morris spoke to us about OFF! for a 2022 cover feature. “We couldn’t be more excited,” he said at the time, eating breakfast in a Silver Lake diner. “We’re releasing 16 songs for the new record, which comes out in September. We signed a deal with Fat Possum Records, who are great.” And not they’re going to Long Beach. Frankie & the Witch Fingers, the Schizophonic, and DJs Elisse and Jose (Caja Magica) also perform. *8 p.m. on Sunday, December 31 at Alex’s Bar, \$64.38, alexbar.com*

**LA Guns
Whisky A Go Go**

As they did every year, Sunset Strip rock-

ers LA Guns will be performing on New Year’s Eve at the iconic Whisky A Go Go. The band’s history is storied and involves a little bit of family crossover with Guns N’ Roses. They’ve split and reformed more than once over the years, various members falling out with various other members. 2021 saw the proper LA Guns release the appropriately titled Checkered Past, the third since founding guitarist Tracii Guns rejoined classic-era vocalist Phil Lewis in the band. Back in 2017, Lewis told this writer that: “It’s going really good. Tracii and I are getting along really well now.” YAY! American Jetset, Slant, Whiskey Dogz, All Sinners, and Villa Nova also perform. *6 p.m. on Sunday, December 31 at the Whisky A Go Go, \$75, whiskeyagogo.com.*

FORMER SHERIFF ALEX VILLANUEVA TO APPEAR IN FRONT OF CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Former L.A. Sheriff Alex Villanueva has agreed to answer oversight committee questions under oath in 2024.

BY ISAI ROCHA



Nearly a year after leaving office as the Los Angeles County sheriff, Alex Villanueva will appear in front of the Los Angeles County Sheriff Oversight Committee to address accusations of deputy gangs.

While in office, Villanueva was asked to appear in front of the committee on multiple occasions and testify under oath. As a civilian, Villanueva has agreed to now speak.

"This is going to be fun," Villanueva wrote in a social media post. "Introducing facts to the (Civilian Oversight Committee). After a year in office, (L.A. County Supervisor Janice Hahn) puppet (Sheriff Robert Luna) can't seem to find a single deputy gang member!"

Villanueva and Supervisor Hahn had multiple public spats, with Hahn calling into question the former sheriff's leadership and vice versa.

In 2022, the committee formally announced an investigation into the L.A. County Sheriff's Department, with Commission Chair Sean Kennedy claiming

deputy gangs had "plagued" L.A. County for decades and its plans to "eradicate" the alleged gangs. At the time, Inspector General Huntsman alleged that at least 40 members of the LASD had been linked to internal gangs through specific tattoos and initiations. Villanueva responded to the accusations by saying Huntsman has an "unhealthy obsession to attack the department."

In September, Villanueva announced his intentions to run for a seat on the L.A. County Board of Supervisors, running directly against Supervisor Hahn.

Villanueva is scheduled to appear January 16, 2024 and is expected to answer the Civilian Oversight Committee's questions under oath.

Metrolink Shuts Down Operations Before The New Year

Metrolink shut down all services in L.A. County for a total of four days before the new year.

From Tuesday, Dec. 26 to Friday, Dec. 29, the train service was unavailable due to maintenance and an upgrade on its

rail system.

Metrolink said it used the time to not just clean, but make repairs that will provide "better reliability."

"We're making the most of the closure to clean, repair and upgrade our rail network, including a new signal system that will provide better operational throughput and reliability in and out of Union Station for our trains," Metrolink said.

Union Station in downtown L.A. remained open for its other operations, including Metro L.A. buses and trains, but riders were unable to use the Metrolink service, even if they had purchased passes. Those who were left with unused

ordinators of those events again had to scramble to find new venues, as the Globe reportedly informed them of a shut down.

Representatives for the Globe Theatre had previously told L.A. Weekly that it planned to remain open for "for sure," but recent attempts to confirm their closure status have not been returned.

As of this writing, a Google search for the Globe Theatre returned a page with the venue labeled as "permanently closed," which had not been done during its brief closure back in November.

Prestige Wrestling, an independent professional wrestling promotion that hosted events regularly at the Globe, had been forced to change its December event location before being told that it could continue to host at the Globe. In yet another last minute change the promotion announced its "Combat Princess" show would be held at the Vermont Hollywood, which will now be the wrestling show's permanent location.

"Due to further complications with the Globe Theatre, we will be moving all future Los Angeles shows to the Vermont Hollywood," Prestige Wrestling said. "That includes 'Combat Princess USA' and 'Moment of Violence.'"

Similarly, the theater was slated to host the "Electron Rave" on Friday, Nov. 17, but the event's coordinators announced it would be moved to The Catch One on West Pico Boulevard.

As was briefly the case in November, the Globe Theatre domain is no longer in service, as those who attempt to enter the website or follow previous ticket links are met with a notice that reads, "Looks like this domain isn't connected to a website yet."

Its Instagram page has also not been updated since Nov. 29, with its last post promoting the Gay Party Saturday (GPS) 5-year anniversary that was scheduled for Dec. 16. The anniversary was moved to Catch One on Pico Boulevard.

The oldest running theater in L.A. had just hosted a sold-out concert for Gims, a Congolese singer who had performed his first show in the city, which may now be the last show at the famous theater.

The Globe Theatre, originally known as the Morosco Theater, first opened its doors in 1913 for vaudeville acts and eventually film screenings. It was attached to the Garland Building and built by the architecture firm Morgan, Walls and Morgan, known for its unique Beaux Art design.

After years without use, the theater was reopened after a remodel in 2015.

The Globe Theatre has a designation in the National Historic District according to the Los Angeles Conservancy.

L.A. Weekly has reached out to the Globe Theatre without a response as of this writing. [E]

Globe Theatre Appears To Be Closed Permanently

The Globe Theatre in downtown Los Angeles has again abruptly canceled its upcoming events and is believed to be closing permanently.

Weeks after multiple scheduled events were canceled and later returned, the co-



DRINKS

MAKE IT A FLUID NEW YEAR

Cocktail Recipes to Kick Off
2024

BY MICHELE STUEVEN

It's been a year of ups and downs. Labor crises, atmospheric rivers, Barbenheimer and Birria Ramen. There have been winners and losers, and it's that time of year to regroup, reflect and recharge for the New Year. Here are 10 cocktail recipes to ring in 2024 as you watch the ball drop and think of good things to come.

Tis the Tea-son

Recipe courtesy of Pamela Wiznitzer for Ketel One Vodka

Ingredients

For eight servings:
12 oz Ketel One vodka
24 oz Earl Grey tea
4 oz fresh squeezed orange juice
2 oz lemon juice
8 oz dark brown sugar syrup*
Garnish: lemon wheels and orange peels

Method

Heat up and prepare the tea first. For every 12 oz of water, use two Earl Grey tea bags. Create the tea and allow the tea bags to over steep for about 10 minutes. In a pot, add all of the ingredients (including the nutmeg) and allow it to sit on low for 5-10 minutes until hot. Serve in a mug and place the lemon wheel and orange peel into the glass for garnish.

PRO TIP: If making this hot punch for a group, prep the tea earlier in the day and once steeped and cooled, combine all of the ingredients into a pitcher and place in the fridge. Store up to 24 hours before serving and place onto the stovetop for 30 minutes to warm before serving.

Sub-Recipe:

*dark brown sugar syrup:
Combine 1 cup brown sugar with 1 cup of warm or hot water.
Stir until dissolved and store in the



fridge for up to three weeks. If you're yearning for a delightful holiday cocktail that skips the alcohol but not the flavor, try this one out of chef Ashish Alfred's recipe book.

No Hangover Holiday Refresher

Ingredients:

1 cup pineapple juice
1/2 cup coconut water
1 Tablespoon agave syrup
Sliced kiwi and pineapple for garnish
Crushed ice
Mix and pour over ice.

El Curandero

Ingredients:

1.50 oz. Hedonistas Espadin mezcal
0.75 oz. Damiana liqueur
1.00 oz. Fresh lime juice
0.75 oz. Light agave nectar
1 pinch Pink Himalayan sea salt
Garnish: Edible flower
Glassware: Margarita glass

Method:

Combine all ingredients in a mixing glass or tin and shake well over ice. Strain into a margarita glass over an ice sphere. Garnish.

Last Rite No. 1

Ingredients:

0.75 oz Hedonistas Espadin mezcal
0.75 oz Yellow Chartreuse or Licore Strega



0.75 oz Italicus Rosolio di Bargamotto
0.75 oz Fresh lemon juice
Garnish: Lemon peel, lemon peel oils
Glassware: Nick & Nora or Coupe

Method:

Combine all ingredients in a mixing glass or tin and shake over ice. Strain the contents straight up into a chilled Nick & Nora or coupe glass. Garnish.

Select Americano

Ingredients:

1.5 oz Select Aperitivo
1.5 oz Sweet vermouth

4 oz soda water
Garnish: Orange slice and green olive
Glass: Highball
Ice: Cubes
Rosso Antico Vermouth recommended

Method:

Combine Select Aperitivo and vermouth over ice in glass. Fill with soda. Stir gently.

Hendrick's Hot Spiced Apple

Ingredients:

1 1/4 parts Hendrick's Gin
5 parts Spiced apple juice

2 cloves, two crushed cardamom, two star anise, two crushed juniper berries, peel of one orange
Garnish: Apple and nutmeg

Method:

Simmer Hendrick's apple juice and spices in a saucepan. Serve in a teacup and garnish with three slices of apple and a dusting of nutmeg.

Hot Gin Old Fashioned

Ingredients:

2 parts Hendrick's Gin
1/4 parts sugar syrup
3 dashes of orange bitters
2 parts boiling water with a twist of orange

Method:

Gently heat the first three ingredients in a pan. Add 50 ml boiling water. Serve in a tankard or teacup and garnish with an orange twist.

Hot Rum Toddy

Ingredients:

1 1/2 oz BACARDÍ Gold Rum
3 oz of hot water
1/4 oz of honey
1 lemon wedge

Method:

Pour hot water into a tempered glass mug. Squeeze the lemon wedge into the water, add honey, and stir until the honey is dissolved. Add rum, and stir gently. Garnish with a cinnamon stick and a lemon slice.

Santa Teresa 1796 Cider Punch

Ingredients:

1 gallon apple cider. Filtered/cold pressed is best.
16 oz Santa Teresa Speyside Whisky Cask Finish
1/4-1/2 cup of brown sugar
1 tsp ground allspice
2-3 tsp whole cloves
2 small oranges, cut in half
6" Ceylon cinnamon

Method:

Combine all in a punch bowl. Stir vigorously.

Why not fly into the New Year with a riff on a Paper Plane?

Ingredients:

1 part Barenjager Honey Bourbon
1 part Aperol
1 part Nonino Amaro
1 part fresh lemon juice

Method:

Shake all ingredients in iced mixing tin and garnish with a paper plane and dehydrated orange

MUSIC

ZEROS TO HEROES

Latino punk pioneers return for holiday show

BY BRETT CALLWOOD

It seems that the punk-loving public's interest in the pioneers of the various geographical scenes is eternal. Here in L.A., that of course means X and the Germs, the Dils and the Weirdos, the Bags and Geza X. But people also loves to dig a little deeper, scratch a little harder, and pull names off of Dangerhouse compilations like Eyes and Black Randy.

Somewhere between all of that sit the Zeros. Formed in 1976 in Chula Vista, the original band featured vocalist/guitarist Javier Escovedo, Robert Lopez (aka El Vez) on guitar, Hector Penalosa on bass and Baba Chenelle on drums. The first ever Zeros show was also the first ever Germs show, with the Weirdos also on the bill.

The Zeros lineup has changed a little bit over the years, but the core is still in place and Escovedo is still at the mic. It's been 24 years since their last full studio album (Right Now!), but Escovedo says that will be changing soon.

"We're recording a new record," he says. "We're not doing it very quickly, unfortunately. But we have a bunch of stuff recorded already. We've just got to go in and mix it, and master it. I mean, we've got like 11 songs done, but I want to go over it with a fine tooth comb, because it's got to be really good. So we're in the middle of making a record, but we haven't made the record yet."

Nowadays, Escovedo and Chenelle are joined by Jesse Rodriguez (son of Dragons man Steve Rodriguez), and bassist Victor Penalosa. They play out when they can, record when they can, but the important thing is that the Zeros is still a going concern.

"(Jesse's) father toured with us a little bit," Escovedo says. "We did a European tour with him. He was there for us when we were stuck for bass player couple of times. The Dragons is my brother's fan (Mario Escovedo is also a member of the Dragons), so it's still in the family. I like it like that. Makes it really easy."

Escovedo agrees that his band, and other L.A. punk originators, are continually discovered by younger audiences.

"Since the internet, it just kind of exploded for newer and younger fans," he says. "I mean, we definitely have our original fans. We played in Reno, I don't know, four or five months ago, and it seemed to be an older crowd. But we definitely have young kids coming up, having records for us to sign and stuff. And it's really, truly great for us. I mean, it's really flattering."

Escovedo, who also records as a solo artist, says that he doesn't listen to much in the way of newer bands, punk or oth-



Zeros

erwise. He's too focused on his own work. He has a couple of solo albums out – City Lights and Kicked Out of Eden. And he has another on the way.

"So I'm working on that, like all the time, and I'm getting close to being finished," he says. "I'm excited about that."

The fact that the Zeros was a Latino

punk band may mean a lot to a lot of people – representation is always important. But Escovedo says that it's not something he ever considered as important.

"We didn't really put any kind of thought behind being Chicano or not, you know, or what it meant," he says. "We were kids when we started. I started writing songs, wanted to be in a band, and met somebody else. We never really ever really talked about it or anything. We just did it. I mean, there were a couple instances where people could have been nicer. But it wasn't a big thing. And punk rock – when we started, it was very inclusive. You know, there are a lot of gays. Everybody was welcomed. And that's what I really loved about the punk clubs. I was just a New York Dolls fan, Lou Reed, Bowie, Modern Lovers and stuff like that. So that's all I was thinking about at the time."

There is another band called the Zeros in L.A. – a purple-haired glitter rock 'n' roll troupe formed in the '80s. Escovedo says that it has caused some confusion in the past.

"Somebody bought tickets for them at the Whisky, thinking it was us," he says. "They were really disappointed. And so she wrote to me and so I said, 'Come to any Zeros show and you're on the list.' So I'll have to remind myself to call her. Yeah, it's annoying. But, you know, there's a bunch of bands called the Zeros. There's one in the Midwest, like in Chicago. They kind of get a lot of attention. In '77. There was an English band called the Zeros. And actually, when we finally toured England a few years ago, the guy wrote to me and said he was gonna come on his show, but I don't think he made it. He said, 'We've been sharing your name for a long time.'"

On Dec. 30, the day before New Year's Eve, there aren't too many shows to choose from, but the Zeros are playing what should be a riotous affair at Zebulon.

"We're practicing hard and getting ready," Escovedo says. "We're excited. You know, there seems to be a lot of excitement about this show, a lot of stuff online that has surprised me."

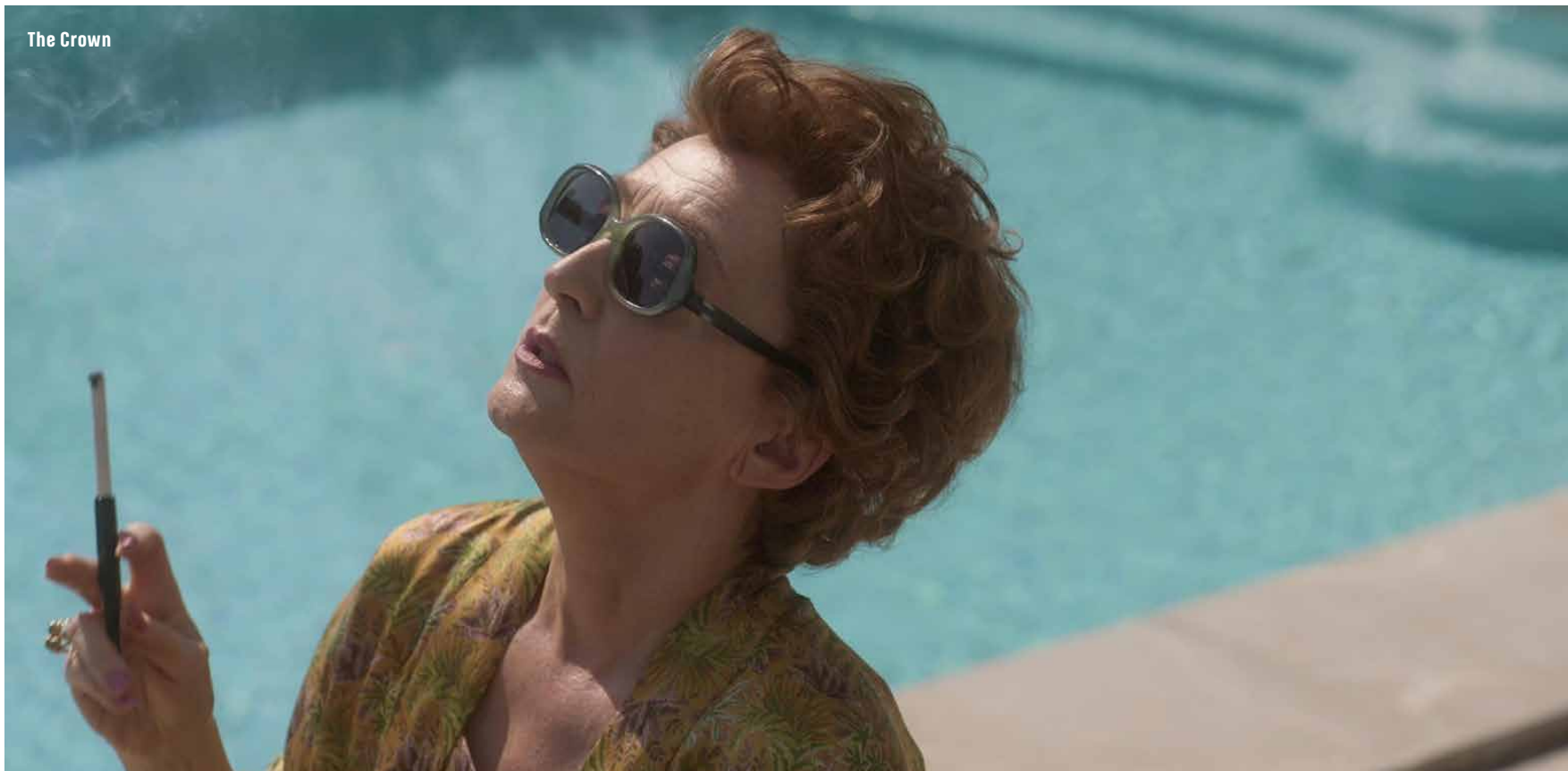
When that show's over and 2024 has been rung in, Escovedo has plenty to keep him busy.

"I'm just working on my records," he says "I don't know what I'm gonna do first. It might be that this solo album is finished first. But you know, I want to put out another Zeros record, and tour it."

The Zeros play with the Uni Boys plus Cretin Hop DJs at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 30, at Zebulon.

UNBINGED: THE LONG GOODBYE

BY ERIN MAXELL



In this installment of UnBinged, we take a look at final farewells of long-running series to see if they went out with bang or with a whimper. Ranging from royal dramas to animated spies to Canadian sitcoms about rural living, these shows either offered fans a sweet kiss goodbye or a kiss off. Here is how they fared.

The Crown (Season 6, Part II; Netflix)

Six seasons, dozens of awards, and one royally peeve monarchy later, Netflix's *The Crown* is finally making its final bow as the dramatic account of Queen Elizabeth II and the Windsors comes to a close. The late monarch who was glorified by Claire Foy, refined by Olivia Colman, and dignified by Imelda Staunton will stand as one of Netflix's great accomplishments...at least for the first four or five seasons.

For many fans and critics, the first half of the sixth season was wrought with exaggeration and fabrication, practically

bordering on sci-fi fiction thanks to the visiting specters of Princess Diana and Dodi Fayed like the Ghosts of Christmas Past. So, did the once-esteemed series that put Netflix on the map send out *The Crown* with the dignity it deserved? Or did the tarnish worsen?

The focus of the series continued to shift to the newer Windsors with the drama surrounding Diana's sons, Prince William (Ed McVey) and Prince Harry (Luther Ford), or as Consuelo Vanderbilt would say, "the heir and the spare." Shilling a romanticized, over-embellished versions of milestone moments in the lives of the royals, episodes centered events such as on William's response to his mother's death, Hallmark Channel versions William and Kate Middleton's (Meg Bellamy) courtship, Harry's notorious costume faux pas, Operation Paget, Princess Margaret's (Lesley Manville) passing, and Prince Charles (Dominic West) and Camilla's (Olivia Williams)

wedding.

However, the issue with the final installment of the series is not the focus of the content but the sometimes absurd style in which it is told. The use of dream sequences featuring "King Tony" Blair as he usurps the Queen to D:Ream's "Things Can Only Get Better" or having a younger Elizabeth (Foy) give the elder Queen a pep talk seems a vast departure from the usual straight-forward narrative fans have come to expect. But while these flights of fancy are a bit over the top, there are the occasional magical moments with the characters that recall why the show was once magnificent.

So while *The Crown* will always be remembered as one of Netflix's most highly-regarded series, perhaps that will only be when referencing in the first few seasons. As with the first half of Season 6, the series takes a downturn in quality. The strange creative decisions continue to imbue the drama to the bitter end,

despite the brilliant performances by the cast, giving it a farewell not quite worthy of a royal.

Archer: Into the Cold (Season 14 finale; FXX)

Back in 2009, Sterling Archer made his debut as an animated parody of a Cold War-era spy who offered dark humor and a slick, well-polished look, and dick jokes galore. And since then, the show remained a staple of basic cable for 14 years. But now FXX bids adieu to the secret world of highly-dysfunctional secret agents and their narcissistic, womanizing leader with the swan song "Into the Cold."

For the final outing, the crew of the team formerly known as International Secret Intelligence Service (aka ISIS, changed for obvious reasons) find themselves without a job as the UN votes to declare all private spy agencies illegal. For a final outing, Lana (Aisha Tyler)



sets up one last outing for Archer (H. Jon Benjamin) and his spy cronies: track down a stolen Chinese bunker-buster bomb and sell it on the black market.

Turns out that other spy agencies are not too jazzed about the UN's plans either, as Archer's former flame/current kill-bot Katya (Ona Grauer) attempts to woo the super spy with promises of restarting the Cold War. She wishes to spark worldwide conflict and thus make the world a terrible place for many so it can be a better place for a few selfish, slutty spies.

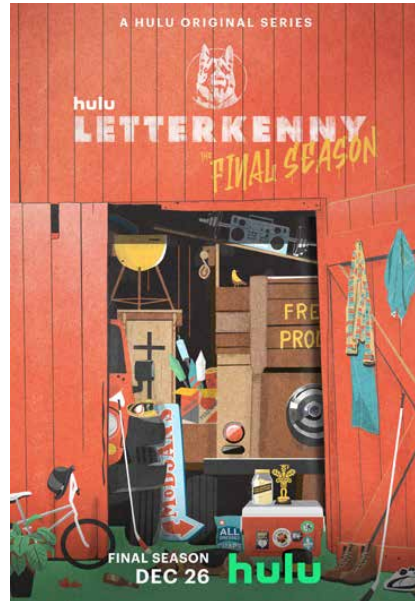
"Into the Cold" is a fitting tribute to the long-running animated series, which offers a fair share of demented and perverse moments for which the toon is well known. In addition to the capricious content, the show also paid tribute to its past, making mention to the gone but not forgotten Mallory (the late, great Jessica Walter).

The final *Archer* wrapped itself up in a neat little bow with all the characters not necessarily finding their happy endings, but happy enough. And given they weren't the greatest spies, happy enough is just fine and dandy as "Into the Cold" still delivered a splendid adios to the spy agency that delivered on depraved farce. Goodbye, Duchess. We salute you.

Letterkenny (Season 12; Hulu)

After 12 years, the vegetable stand is finally closing as Wayne, Derry, Squirrely Dan, and hot girl Katie take a victory lap as they close up shop. Known for clever word play and back and forth banter, the gangs' small-town antics were a welcomed diversion from big city problems.

Created by Jared Keeso and Jacob Tierney, *Letterkenny* was a much celebrated sitcom from our neighbors in the Great White North that was generally ignored by most everyone in the States. For the unfamiliar looking for a binge, the first few years of *Letterkenny* shenanigans were short-form joy. But sometime in the later seasons, the quality became uneven,



offering a few good episodes between forgettable chapters. But given the longevity of the series, a few bad apples didn't spoil the bunch.

The last season offers a through line missing from previous seasons about being stuck in a rut. In this case, the rut is the town of Letterkenny itself. Wayne (Keeso) is at a crossroads with his relationship with Rosie (Clark Backo), Derry (Nathan Dales) is tired of being the butt of the joke and starts hanging with the wrong crowd, while Katie (Michelle Mylett) wants to move to Mexico for a change of scenery. And as the gang work out their Letterkenny problems, the series offers a send-off to each character. While the season isn't the strongest as far as laughs or moments, it is a proper adieu for audiences who stayed with the Canadian sitcom through the years.

(Still need a reason to binge *Letterkenny*? Here is the elevator pitch: It's smart, it's funny, it's only 6 to 10 episodes per season, and each episode is about 30 minutes. And that's what's up.)

CANNABIS

LA WEEKLY'S 2023 CANNABIS SUPERLATIVES

Here is some of the weed stuff we loved in 2023

BY JIMI DEVINE

Headie Boy Accessory of the year: Puffco XL Chamber

Few things hit as hard this year as Puffcos new XL chambers for its Peak vaporizer. The amount of terps one can shovel into that thing brought people a lot of joy in 2023. I mostly use my standard 3D chamber, but there is no denying how fun a half gram dab before some pizza is.

Most Actual Upscale Cannabis Party: Legends of Hash

Legends of Hash was one classy affair. On top of a bunch of the best hash on the planet, participants were transported somewhere that looked like it was owned by some rich Moroccan Bedouins for the two-day mega sesh. There was also a cereal bar!

Best LA Cannabis Event Gone National: Zalympix

Zalymphix continues to spread LA cannabis culture nationwide backboned by Greenwolf's legacy of providing Los Angeles with the heat. The New York and Michigan editions of Zalymphix only further cemented its status as one of the top cannabis competitions on the planet. We're looking forward to seeing what they have in store for 2024.

Best Moment Of Progress: Luke Scarmazzo getting out

The Feds hate Luke Scarmazzo — every time he had a shot at freedom, they threw a wrench in the mix. But in February that all changed, as he finally came home after serving 14 years of a 22-year sentence. And for some, that moment signaled the gates would probably open for many, as we saw with President Biden's Christmas pardons. We look forward to more progress in 2024.

Fastest growing International market: Thailand

It felt like every place we traveled in 2023, some local big name was going to or returning from some new project they have in Thailand. There is this crazy convergence of the global market in Southeast Asia. We can't wait to head back and see how far things progressed this year.

Most Bummer Cease and Desist: French Laundry

Maven is one of the best brands in California. French Laundry, the most silver medal awarded strain of the year that only lost to killers, had to be renamed because of a C&D from the restaurant in Yountville that shared the name. The folks in wine country were convinced the wooks knew they existed and Maven wasn't talking about a washing machine in France. Wild stuff.

Most Hyped Sesh: Masonics Terp Tasting

I know I'm a little biased being Compton's favorite cannabis critic, but everyone and their brother had Masonic's Terp Tasting at or near the top of the list for the most fun they had at a sesh this year. It was a great way to cap off 2023.

Best place to smoke weed legally outside your home: West Hollywood

West Hollywood continues to lead the continent on legal consumption. Cannabis isn't legal unless everyone can smoke it. West Hollywood is one of the only places providing people who don't own a home a legal space to enjoy cannabis.

Best New Product: Octave Flight Box

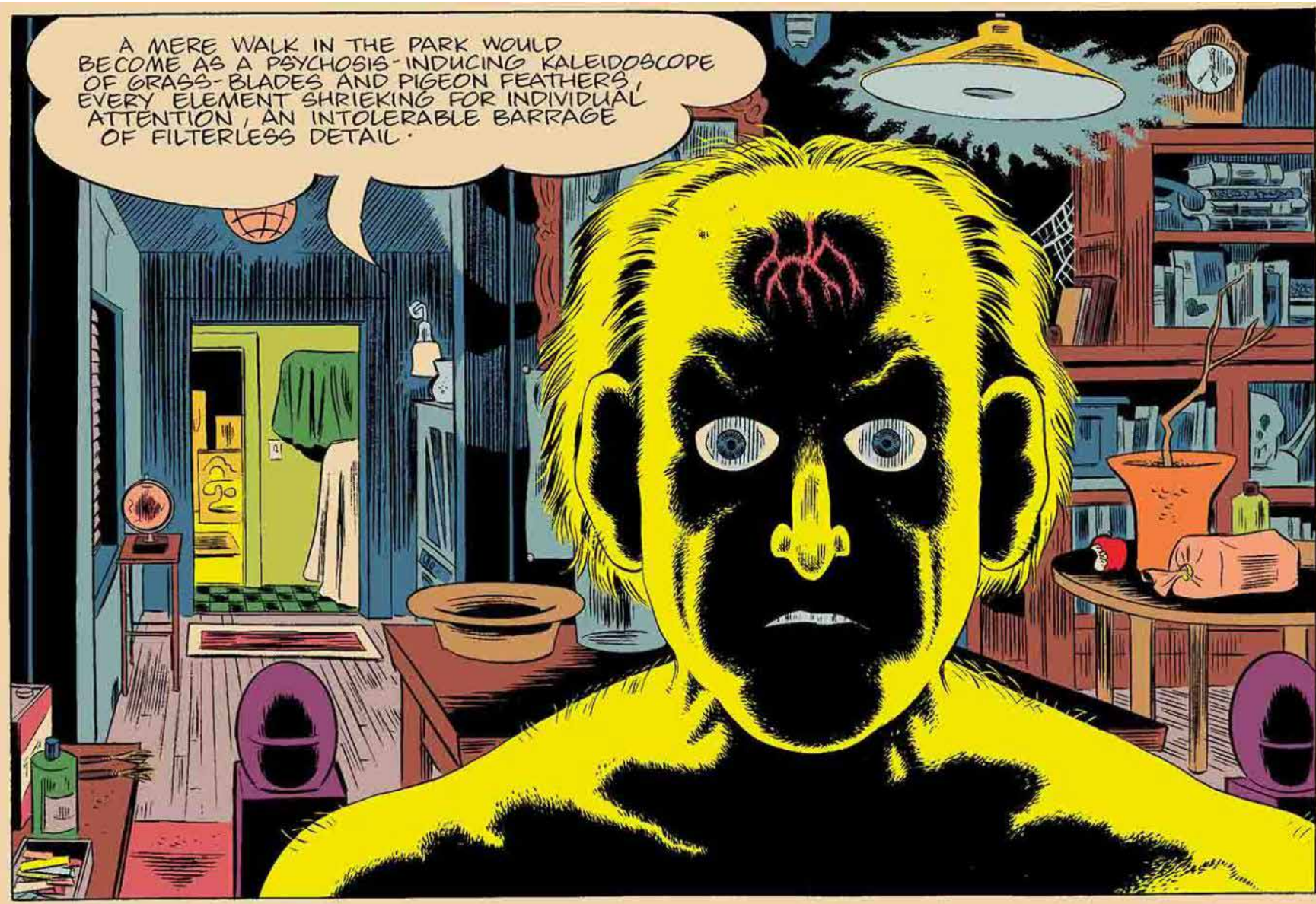
We are completely convinced the Flight Box will be the biggest thing in vapes in 2024. It's just so useful. Sometimes on flights to Asia I just don't feel high anymore. Never again. I can't wait to hit one in the bathroom!!!

Most Hyped Thing Not in LA: Blue Lobster

Shoutouts to Big Maine Trees. I can't remember the last time an out-of-state cut that California barely has access to drove this much excitement, but feel free to correct me. I only smoked it once, but it was the real deal and easy to understand why people are so hyped on it.

Most Needed Terpene Profile: Nail Polish Remover

Please hunt nail polish remover terps fam. I know they are super delicate and have the shortest shelf life of anything besides a true acetone cherry terp, but we deserve it as a community. Permanent Marker is the closest thing that has blown up, but there is another level of nail polish terp that tickles your sinus like a Sour Diesel. Happy hunting!



ART

DANIEL CLOWES'S MONICA GOES TO HELL AND FINDS IT IS US

The graphic novelist traverses time, space, and psyches with outrageous aplomb.

BY R.C. BAKER

Daniel Clowes sets the stage for his latest graphic novel, *Monica*, by jumping right into the deep end of history's primordial slop — protozoa, dinosaurs, pharaohs, Christ, plague, Columbus, Hitler, the bomb, a dying JFK, and

the *Beverly Hillbillies* all make colorful cameos on the opening pages.

Then you start meeting the characters, including a soldier in Vietnam and his girl back home, Penny, who steps out with a snarky hipster painter fond of jerking the chains encumbering the

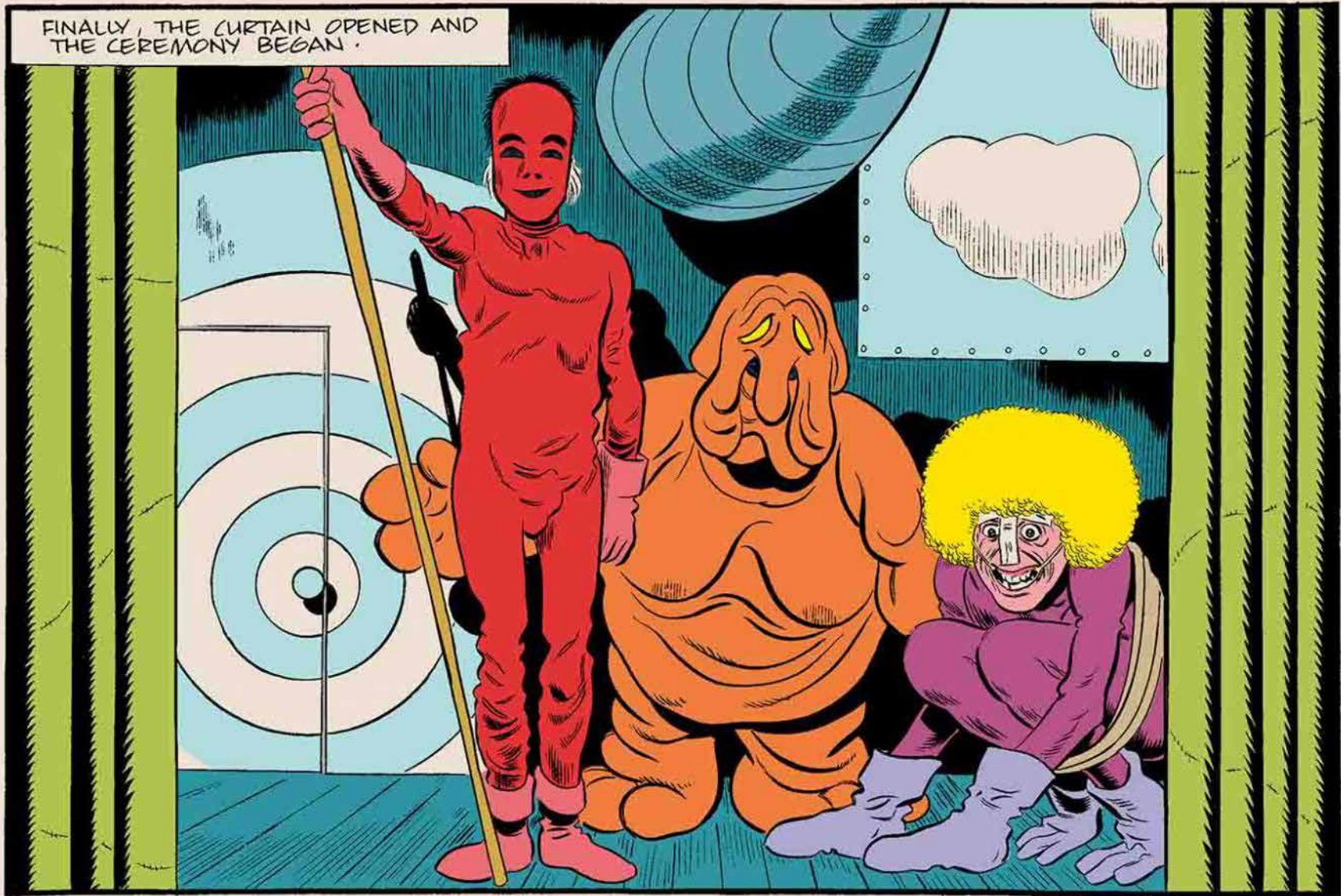
bourgeoisie: "Don't you love rich people? They're so happy and they smell great! ... We have to warn them about the revolution! ATTENTION BARONS OF INDUSTRY: DOOM IS NIGH! BOARD YOUR WINDOWS!"

The flighty (not to say bipolar? schiz?)

Penny moves from apartment to apartment and man to man and a couple of years later begets the book's namesake, who spends much of her life seeking out the identity of her father. Finding success by following in her mother's hippie-entrepreneurial footsteps when she opens a shop selling handmade candles, Monica is the perpetual square peg in a round-holed universe.

Like the shifting shapes and shadows in a lava lamp, the various characters might find themselves abducting a wayward teen, conversing with a ghostly grandparent through the radio, in a coma, in "an oppositional state of introversion," or marching resolutely into the bowels of an abusive cult (is there any other kind?).

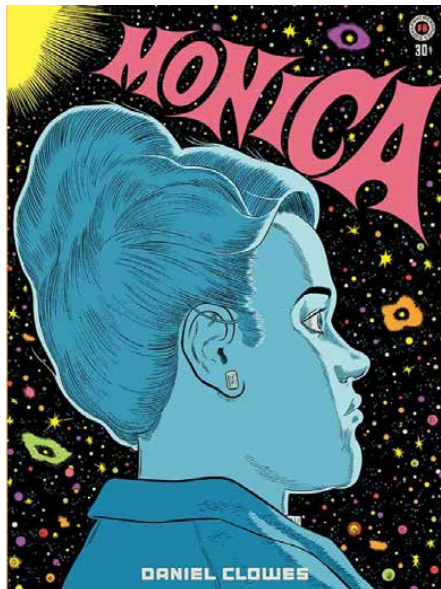
Eventually deserted by her mother as well, Monica is void of love — "I'm officially all alone in this world: no kids,



cousins, aunts; not even a pet (allergies). And no, I never got married or anything like that. There were a few boyfriends (and one girlfriend), but nothing ever lasted more than a few months.”

Yet she perseveres: “I’m a tough old bird. You’ll be lucky to look half this good when you’re my age.” Indeed, in the panels, Monica ranges from fleshy nubile college student to fit pony-tailed retiree. Her and the other characters’ transfiguring journeys through truly bizarre experiences — as personal assistant to a narcissistic straight-to-video starlet or as initiate in a murderous woodland ritual, to note just a couple — are imparted through succinctly observed hair-style changes, increasing wrinkles, and period wardrobes.

While Penny’s mood swings are as exhibitionistic as a trapeze performance, Monica holds emotions closer to the vest. In one scene, a lone whale — af-



flicted by barnacles that recall the red chancres on the story’s earlier plague victims — surfaces on an empty sea, accompanied by Monica’s interior monologue: “Things got pretty terrible after that — daily panic attacks, unpredictable sobbing jags, total isolation.”

As always, Clowes’s drawings deftly mix evocative scene-setting with telling details. Three-quarters of the way through the story we again meet the derisive painter and candidate for Monica’s paternity, now adorned with thinning white hair and a ratty bathrobe. In his cluttered studio, paintbrushes jut from a Savarin coffee can sitting on a table laden with half-eaten meals and squashed paint tubes, an art historical prop recalling another insular and reclusive (though gaudily successful) artist, Jasper Johns.

Clowes’s hand-wrought typography also does narrative duty, visually con-

veying situations and emotion, as in the buoyant, textured bubble letters he crafts for “THE OPENING” to delineate a spiritual movement that allows followers to “pass through the cone,” where they’re able to “fully experience the vast universal workings beyond our deluded perceptions.” By the time we reach the bottom of the page, the program has become more rigid and controlling, with sharply angled and beveled capital letters incarnating “THE WAY,” the cult Monica lands in while searching for her father.

With its outlandish narrative excursions, Clowes’s method might at first seem a reflection of our Internet age’s gibbering chaos. But as subplots and characters segue in and out, classic throughlines become more apparent and the twisty tale emerges as intriguingly real and tough, and as entwined as a strand of human DNA.

Monica is published by Fantagraphics.

LA WEEKLY CLASSIFIEDS

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