

# LAWEEKLY

JONSI'S AMBIENT  
SCULPTURAL SENSORIA  
ROCKER MISS VELVET HAS  
SET HER PHYSICAL JOURNEY  
TO MUSIC

BOEING GROUNDS JETS  
AFTER ALASKA AIRLINES  
DOOR BLOWS OFF MIDFLIGHT

JANUARY 12-18, 2024 / VOL. 46 / NO. 10  
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**AFTER THE GOLD RUSH** REDISCOVERING NEVADA COUNTY  
BY MICHELE STUEVEN



CALENDAR

# GO EDITORS' PICKS

ARTS

## THURSDAY, JANUARY 11

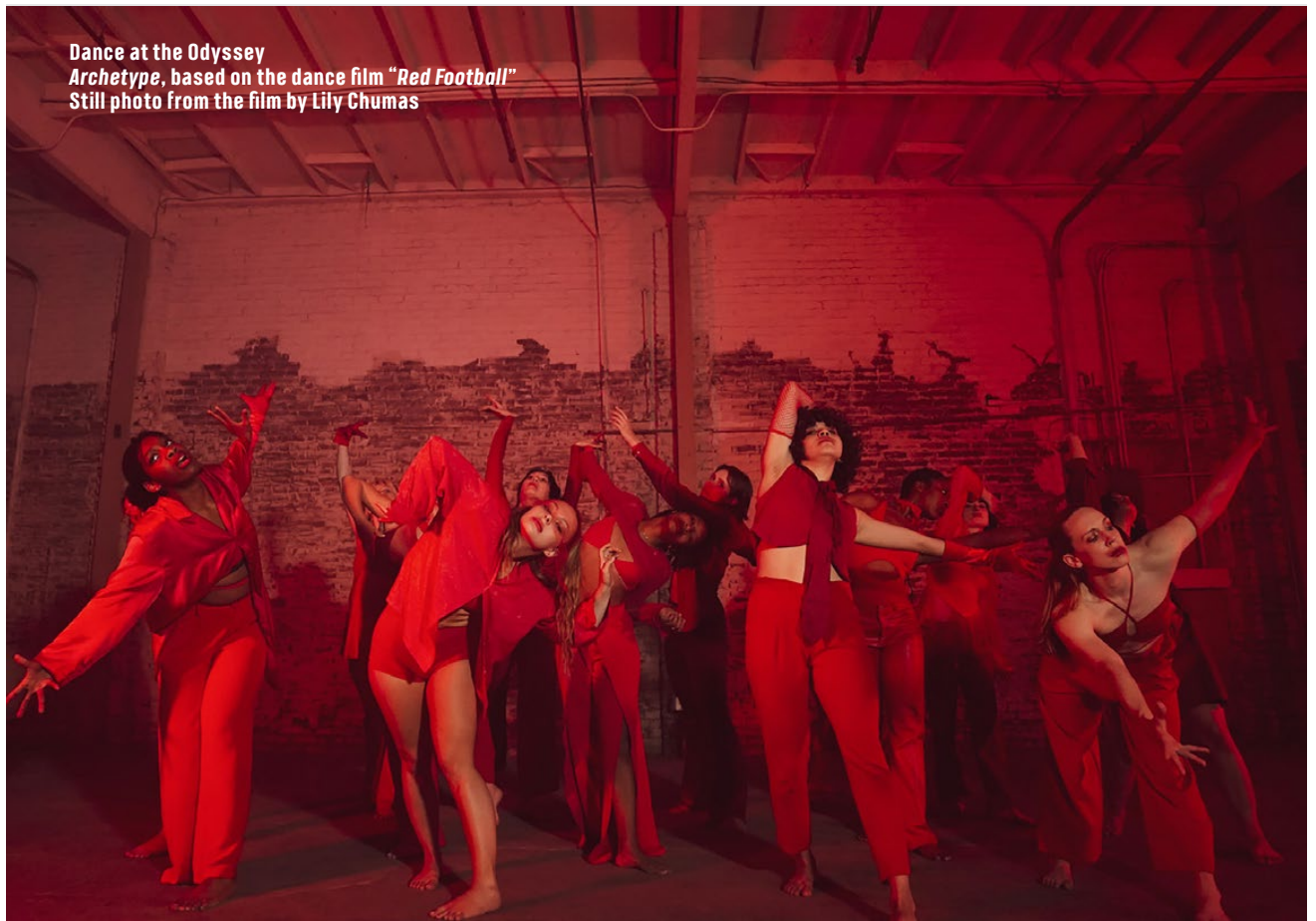
**Bennett Miller at Gagosian Beverly Hills.** The Oscar-nominated director's first solo exhibition in Los Angeles links the emergence of artificial intelligence with the history of the photographic image, posing questions around the contingent and enigmatic nature of perception. The results are imbued with a melancholic aura that manifests from the experience of loss and the inexorable passage of time. *456 N. Camden Dr., Beverly Hills; Opening reception: Thursday, January 11, 6-8pm; on view through February 10; free; gagosian.com.*

**Wim Wenders Retrospective at American Cinematheque.** Join legendary filmmaker and pioneer of New German Cinema, Wim Wenders, in person for a 15-film retrospective that attempts the impossible: to capture the curiosity, profundity, and pure cinematic joy central to the auteur's films. Running January 11 - February 28, the films screen across three AC locations: *The Aero in Santa Monica, Los Feliz Theater on Vermont Ave., and the Egyptian in Hollywood. Screenings happen afternoons and evenings; tickets range from \$8-\$20, and several screenings are members-only. americancinematheque.com.*

## FRIDAY, JANUARY 12

**Dance at the Odyssey.** For the 7th year, the festival's mixed programs offer a wide range of dance over six weeks hosting six companies, twenty choreographers, forty-nine performers, a "dance wrecking" and four world premieres. Reminding us that the language of dance is universal. Celebrated choreographers and companies include Rebecca Pappas, Lily Chumas, Punto de Inflexión, Goblin Party, Azuki Umeda and Galiana&Nikolchev's Useless Room. Curated by Barbara Mueller-Wittmann. *2055 S. Sepulveda Blvd., West LA; Performances January 12 - February 18; \$25/any three shows \$60; odysseytheatre.com.*

Dance at the Odyssey  
Archetype, based on the dance film "Red Football"  
Still photo from the film by Lily Chumas



**Sam Gilliam: The Last Five Years at David Kordansky Gallery.** Infused with the sense of discovery that accompanied every phase of Gilliam's long career, and that only seemed to increase at the end of his life as he found new possibilities in some of his most enduring formal vocabularies, this exhibition documents the compre-

hensive way in which Gilliam surveyed his own artmaking, so that each addition to his total body of work not only added to his range, but served as a reassessment and reconsideration of everything that came before. *5130 W. Edgewood Pl., Mid-City; Opening reception: Friday, January 12, 6-8pm; On view through March 3; free; davidkordanskygallery.com.*

## SATURDAY, JANUARY 13

**Jessie Homer French: Normal Landscapes at Various Small Fires.** Following her inclusion in the 49th Venice Biennale and the Hammer Museum's Made in L.A. 2023 biennial, *Normal Landscapes* presents a collection of anti-pastoral paintings that playfully reflect on the absurdity of earthly existence through French's whimsical depictions of death, environmental catastrophes, and rural life. *812 N. Highland Ave., Hollywood; Opening reception: Saturday, January 13, 5-7pm; On view through February 17; free; vsf.la.*

**January Exhibitions at Thinkspace.** *Super A's Atypical* presents Dutch artist Stefan Thelen's hyperreal murals and studio paintings that explore the world of human contradiction. *Make Them Real* is the debut U.S. solo show from Philippines-based artist Humbly—imaginative and adventure-filled worlds, characterized by

children donning extravagant costumes and embarking on journeys. Gustavo Rimada's *Campo Santo* draws on his personal history, from his early childhood in Mexico, to his adolescence in Indio, and his time in the Army. Anthony Solano's *Alive & Well* is the fourth chapter of an ongoing story in which the artist interrogates "the thriving life that so strongly existed before." And in the Dog House, L. Croskey's *Cuttin' It Close* is a diary of emotions from his past and the lessons L.C. has learned from funny, sometimes dark relationships, and sometimes just good old-fashioned sex. *4207 W. Jefferson Blvd., West Adams; Opening reception & Night Market: Saturday, January 13, 6-10pm; On view through February 3; free; think-spaceprojects.com.*

**UnCabaret: Beth's UnBirthday Party at the Nimoy.** UnCabaret is a legendary forum for wildly fun, idiosyncratic, intimate, conversational comedy. Arguably the original "alt comedy" show—and a bona fide Los Angeles comedy institution—UnCabaret has long been an incubator and venue for what reads like a who's who roster of innovative and subversive performers. Joined by musical director Mitch Kaplan, comedians Michael Patrick King, Dana Gould, Julia Sweeney, Byron Bowers, Joey Soloway and special musical guests, UnCabaret is a





must-see experience for any comedy lover. 1262 Westwood Blvd., Westwood; Saturday, January 13, 8pm; \$32; [cap.ucla.edu](http://cap.ucla.edu).

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 14

#### Jonathan Casella: This Palace at The Pit

**LA.** At first glance, the pictures appear as mixed media collages, but upon closer inspection, it's clear that all the elements are painted, either screen printed in acrylic, brushed, or stenciled. The flattening effect eliminates depth and texture, forcing all forms onto a single plane. In one sense, the graphic shapes and hard edges are reminiscent of comic book cells, where the representational content unfolds narratively from left to right. Meaning is linguistic and temporal and requires movement on the viewer's part through the labyrinthine spaces. This is the final exhibition in the Pit's Glendale location. 918 Ruberta Ave., Glendale; Opening reception: Sunday, January 14, 3-5pm; On view through February 17; free; [the-pit.la](http://the-pit.la).

### MONDAY, JANUARY 15

**MLK Day at the Skirball.** In celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day and in honor of the legacy of Dr. King, the Skirball is opening its doors and offering free admission to *This Light of Ours: Activist Photographers of the Civil Rights Movement*. The exhibition (on view through

February 25) showcases rarely-seen photos of Dr. King alongside more than 150 photographs taken by Movement insiders who chronicled the fight for civil rights. The day includes docent tours, access to all museum exhibitions, food and activism programs, and more. 2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd., Brentwood; Monday, January 15, noon-3pm; free; [skirball.org](http://skirball.org).

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 16

**David Edward Byrd: Poster Child:** The Psychedelic Art & Technicolor Life of David Edward Byrd at *Book Soup*. Beginning in the late 1960s, graphic artist David Edward Byrd pioneered the iconic visual styles that have come to define rock 'n' roll graphics. Byrd created poster, concert, and album art for Jimi Hendrix, the Who, Lou Reed, Janis Joplin, Jefferson Airplane, Ravi Shankar, Traffic, Van Halen, the Grateful Dead, the 1969 Woodstock Festival, and KISS—as well as iconic imagery for Broadway shows including *Follies*, *Godspell*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, and more. *Poster Child* (Cameron Books) shares Byrd's artwork along with anecdotes about his encounters with rock 'n' roll legends. 8818 Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood; Tuesday, January 16, 7pm; free; [booksoup.com](http://booksoup.com).

### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17

**Kate Berlant at Pasadena Playhouse.** In her widely celebrated one-woman show, revered comedian and boundary-pushing performer Kate Berlant explores the events of her life that have brought her to this moment. Embodying many characters in this tour de force performance, in *KATE*, she expertly morphs before our eyes and exposes a truth she has, until now, kept hidden. Directed by Bo Burnham. 39 S. El Molino Ave., Pasadena; Previews begin Wednesday, January 17; Opening night: January 21, performances through February 11; \$39-\$137; [pasadenaplayhouse.org](http://pasadenaplayhouse.org).

## MUSIC

### JANUARY 12-18 60th Anniversary Celebration Concerts Whisky A Go Go

The world famous whisky is hosting a series of shows to celebrate its 60th (!) anniversary, and Los Altos outfit the Chocolate Watch Band was the first last week. This week, they're hosting Los Angeles blues rockers Canned Heat (Jan. 12), Glendale psychedelic rockers the Strawberry Alarm Clock (Jan. 13), the current lineup of Love featuring Johnny Echols (Jan. 14) and

Robby Krieger of the Doors (Jan. 16). There's also a cover band called Captain Flashback's Laurel Canyon Love on Jan. 15, and each show has a ton of opening bands. Loads of '60s joy! 6 p.m. on Friday, January 12, Saturday, January 13, Sunday, January 14, Monday, January 15 and Tuesday, January 16 at the Whisky A Go Go, \$20-\$90, [whiskyagogo.com](http://whiskyagogo.com).

### The Eagles Kia Forum

This is, we're being told, the Eagles' final tour. Following the death of Glenn Frey, the band has battled valiantly on, but they seem to be about done and that's probably appropriate. The Eagles remain one of the least cool but most loved bands to ever have existed in the rock realm, with many people constantly criticizing them for being decidedly inoffensive. Yet they've written and released a ton of classics and they should be remembered fondly. Steely Dan also performs. 7:30 p.m. on Friday January 12 and Saturday January 13, at the Kia Forum, \$150+, [thekiaforum.com](http://thekiaforum.com).

### Black Flag The Regent

Greg Ginn is the only current member of Black Flag who was in any of the classic lineups, but current singer Mike Vallely is determined to do the band's legacy proud. We spoke to Vallely at the start of the current tour, which is about to wind up, and he told us that a great mix of people are coming to see Black Flag in 2019. "There are old school punker types that are just excited that the band is playing again. A few bucket list type people. A lot of skateboarders come out, first because the music intersects with skateboarding, but then a lot of skater types come to support me," he said. The show at the Observatory in September was unexpectedly excellent, so expect more of the same here. 7 p.m. on Saturday, January 13 at the Regent, \$27, [regentdtla.com](http://regentdtla.com).

### Madison Beer The Grammys Museum

Pop singer and songwriter Madison Beer will take part in a conversation at the Grammy Museum, where they are particularly good at this sort of thing. Afterwards Beer, so is actually Grammy-nominated, will perform a short set. "Madison Beer is a platinum-selling recording artist, songwriter, producer, and author," the museum says. "Since making her music debut at the age of 12, Madison has evolved into a dynamic and versatile artist whose sound blends multiple genres of music with powerful and emotive vocals that convey a raw and honest portrayal of the human experience." Nailed it. 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 17 at The Grammy Museum, [Grammymuseum.org](http://Grammymuseum.org) [R]



# BOEING GROUNDS JETS AFTER ALASKA AIRLINES DOOR BLOWS OFF MIDFLIGHT

Boeing Airplanes continue to be inspected after an alarming incident where a door flew off on its way to Southern California.

BY ISAI ROCHA



**T**he Boeing Company has grounded at least 65 jets after a door blew off on a flight en route to Ontario, California on January 5.

Boeing said it would continue inspecting its 737 Max 9 model jets, as instructed by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and is investigating the incident that occurred on an Alaska Airlines flight while 16,000 feet in the air, taking off from Portland International Airport.

“We agree with and fully support the FAA’s decision to require immediate inspections of 737-9 MAX airplanes with the same configuration as the affected airplane,” Boeing Commercial Airplanes President and CEO Stan Deal said in a statement Monday. “Our teams have been working diligently — with

thorough FAA review — to provide comprehensive, technical instructions to operators for the required inspections. This morning, our team issued the instructions via a multi-operator message. We are working closely with 737-9 MAX customers and providing the technical assistance they may need while staying in contact with the FAA as we move forward.”

The planes were grounded through the weekend and on Tuesday, the FAA announced a delay in inspections, saying it would not rush the process and focus on the planes’ safety.

The Alaska Airlines incident, documented by passengers through video and photos, continues to be investigated after an emergency door flew off as it took off from Portland, Oregon, and

made its way to Southern California. There were reportedly no passengers sitting next to the door at the time and no injuries. When the door blew away, the plane’s emergency oxygen masks were deployed for the passengers to wear.

Since the incident, there have been reports of the door being found in the backyard of an Oregon resident, as well as a cell phone that is presumed to belong to a passenger.

“This stuff matters,” Calhoun said while speaking to employees about the incident through a webcast. “Everything matters. Every detail matters. This isn’t a lecture... it’s nothing more than a reminder of the seriousness with which we have to approach our work. We’re going to approach this acknowledging our mistake... every step of the way. It’s going to be a lot about transparency.”

## Former Dodger Julio Urias Not Charged By L.A. District Attorney’s Office

Julio Urias, longtime star pitcher for the Los Angeles Dodgers, will not face felony charges from the Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office after being arrested for alleged domestic violence.

Urias was arrested on September 3, 2023, amid the Dodgers season, for an alleged incident outside BMO Stadium where the Los Angeles Football Club plays its home games.

It was alleged that Urias forcefully pushed the woman against a fence during an argument, later pulling her by her hair.

This is Urias’ second domestic violence incident since joining the Dodgers. In 2019, Urias was suspended

for 20 games following an alleged domestic violence incident, per regulations set by Major League Baseball (MLB) and the MLB Players Association.

Urias was put on administrative leave this time, missing the remainder of the Dodgers’ 2023 regular season and playoffs. He is now a free agent and has not been signed by any MLB team.

The case will now be examined by the Los Angeles City Attorney’s Office where Urias can still face misdemeanor charges.

In 2023, the Los Angeles Dodgers parted ways with another starting pitcher accused of domestic violence, Trevor Bauer. After missing more than a season during the investigation, Bauer was not convicted and free to sign with any team. He opted to play in Japan and

seeks an MLB contract in 2024.

## Sinead O’Connor’s Death Ruled To Be By Natural Causes

The death of beloved singer and activist Sinead O’Connor was officially ruled to be by natural causes, according to the London Inner South’s coroner’s office.

O’Connor died on July 26, 2023 at the age of 56 and was found unresponsive in her London home.

“It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our beloved Sinéad,” the family said in a statement following her death. “Her family and friends are devastated and have requested privacy at this very difficult time.”

The Irish-born singer began her singing career in 1987 with her debut album *The Lion and the Cobra*, selling more than 2 million records worldwide. O’Connor’s second album release in 1990 caught fire worldwide, charting No. 1 in dozens of countries, including the U.S. *Billboard* 200.

Best known for her cover of Prince’s “Nothing Compares 2 U,” for which she won three Grammy Awards, O’Connor hit her stride musically in the 1990s and often found herself amid controversy. On more than one occasion, O’Connor was critical of the Irish Catholic church and the sexual abuse surrounding it, calling the Vatican a “nest of devils,” in an interview with the *Guardian*, and once tore up a photo of Pope John Paul II while a guest on *Saturday Night Live*. Days later after the SNL incident, O’Connor was to perform at a Bob Dylan anniversary concert, but was booed off stage by an unrelenting crowd.

O’Connor announced her retirement on Twitter in 2021, saying, “I’ve gotten older and I am tired.”

**71-Year-Old Bank Robber Arrested**  
Bruce Edward Bell, 71, was arrested after a string of bank robberies in Los Angeles.

In his most recent December heist, Bell allegedly stole more than \$64,000, maneuvering his way to restricted areas of the bank and demanding that employees fill his bag with cash.

“During this incident, Bell entered the location, grabbed an employee and pointed a firearm,” the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) said in a statement. “Bell forced the employee to walk over to an access-restricted door. Bell demanded entry into the secure area and stated he would otherwise shoot the employee.”

LAPD said they found Bell in his vehicle, had him pull over, and made the arrest. In Bell’s car, officers found a replica firearm, although it is not clear if it was used in the most recent robbery.

Bell has had four prior bank robbery convictions. [A]



# THREE ENCHANTING NEW REASONS TO VISIT PALM SPRINGS

BY MICHELE STUEVEN



It's peak season in the desert and the dining scene continues to heat up. Here are three great new restaurants not to miss in downtown Palm Springs.

Just open for about a year with a view of the Marilyn Monroe statue and the Palm Springs Art Museum, **Clandestino** is the sister restaurant to the high-end Jalisco-style Tac/Quila, from local restaurateurs Liz and Mark Ostoich, who also own the always-packed Farm French bistro.

Clandestino is a moodier version offering stylish and imaginative small plates of Mexican classics, like stuffed guerito peppers with chorizo, Oaxaca cheese and chipotle mayo. There's an

artful lineup of tacos including the poblano on a beet tortilla with sautéed poblano peppers, corn, red onion, oyster mushrooms, queso fresco, and roasted poblano sauce. Plates like the carne asada come with perfectly grilled steak, guacamole, pinto beans, roasted jalapeño, cambay onion, house-made corn or flour tortillas and a choice of red, green or white rice in honor of the Mexican flag. There's a wide variety of ceviches, and the pozole verde in its own pot is a must on a cool winter night on the strip.

The colorful and festive bar reflects what's becoming a unique artful Palm Springs lounge style and holds more

than 30 different tequilas and 15 mezcals. There's a decadent lineup of margaritas, like Jamaica with tequila, pineapple juice, lime juice and agave with a black salt rim, as well as other signature cocktails like the Niña Fresa with vodka, passion fruit liqueur, strawberry puree and coconut milk, and a Moody Sister with gin, lemon, honey thyme syrup, and a red wine float that's sweet, strong, sassy and layered.

Just a short stroll down the promenade is the new **Canopy Wine Lounge**, a unique addition to the downtown Palm Springs landscape.

Elegant and approachable at the same time, the design work of California Modern and Mid-Century Modern local interior designer Christopher Kennedy offers a dramatic view of the San Jacinto Mountains. Conceived by former U.S. Ambassador to Argentina and Palm Springs local, owner Noah Mamet along with Alejandro Bulgheroni Family Estate Wines have enlisted Director of Operations Ellis Delahousay, Winemaker Joshua Kelly, and Managers Phil Barrood and Liz Swartz to curate a profound selection of wines from around the world.

The lounge features Michel Rolland, Philippe Melka, Matt Sands, Alberto Antonini and Juan Pablo Murgia, as well as Mamet's personal wine portfolio from Mendoza, Argentina, under the label 'Gran

Diplomat,' showcasing Malbec, Cabernet Franc Blend, and Red Blend and Rosé. He's currently developing the first and only wine made in Palm Springs — Desert Wren — which is finishing its aging process on-premise in their terracotta-hued wine amphora.

Light bites include empanadas, caviar and diverse charcuteries that can be leisurely nibbled while tasting the wines by candlelight under the wall-sized mural that portrays a desert garden. Suspended over the bar are white plaster chandeliers shaped like cacti, with custom mid-century banquette seating and a blossoming canvas palm tree. Extended hours and menu items will

follow, but it's the perfect pause for a late afternoon stop after you shop during the desert season.

Not far from the recently opened Agua Caliente Cultural Museum (a fascinating look at the history of the Coachella Valley and worth a visit) is Susan Feniger and Mary Sue Milliken's latest venture, **Alice B.**

Inspired by the famous bohemian Alice B. Toklas, credited for inventing the marijuana brownie and longtime partner of novelist and poet Gertrude Stein, the restaurant anchors the newly built 122-unit Living Out Palm Springs, a luxury apartment complex for active LGBTQ 55+ adults that also includes a movie theater, fitness center, game room, massage room, hair and nail salons.

The buzzy new indoor/outdoor restaurant's Executive Chef Lance Velasquez spent the majority of his career working in Northern California at Chateau Souverain alongside Gary Danko, The Restaurant at The Ritz-Carlton San Francisco, Campton Place, and as the founding chef at Moose's restaurant in San Francisco.

The menu departs from the usual Feniger/Milliken fare you'd find at Socalo, Border Grill or BBQ Mexicana. It's an all-American mix of comfort classics with Mediterranean twists like the cornmeal cheddar drop biscuits with cardamom honey and sesame seeds. Large plates include seasonal offerings like a charming pumpkin risotto full of texture with pan-fried mushrooms, crunchy hazelnuts, and Parmigiana Reggiano, as well as a down-home-style fried chicken cutlet with apple persimmon salad. Other standards include braised lamb shank and grilled New York strip steak.

The drinks, like the Fitzgerald Fizz combo of Hendrick's gin, lemon juice, prickly pear hibiscus syrup, frothy egg white and soda, or Gertie's Perfect Date Manhattan with date-infused rye bring on a nostalgic taste of Parisian avant-garde of the early 20th century and the comfort of Living Out. After dinner tip: Stop off for a purchase at The Leaf Weed Dispensary in Palm Desert and go home to turn on, tune in, drop out and watch the 1968 *I Love You Alice B. Toklas* with Peter Sellers and a sexy lit Leigh Taylor Young in her film debut.

The Palm Springs International Film Festival takes place from Thursday, Jan. 4 through Monday, Jan. 15, and will include Liz Lachman's documentary, *Susan Feniger: Forked*. It follows the celebrity chef as she hunts down her passion, authentic street food from around the world to create an original restaurant showcasing those flavors for Susan Feniger's STREET. **[A]**





# AFTER THE GOLD RUSH

Rediscovering Nevada County

BY MICHELE STUEVEN

If you were ever a fourth-grader in California, you were force fed the dusty and parched history of the California Gold Rush that droned on about the growth of the state as a cultural and industrial center, life in the mines, the impact on the environment and the evolution of technology.

It was a phenomenon that only lasted for seven years from 1848 to 1855 and brought about 300,000 people to California with the hope of becoming rich after gold was discovered by James W. Marshall at Sutter's Mill.

Boomtowns in Nevada County like Grass Valley and Nevada City began popping up, bringing with them culture and theaters with historic figures like American writer and journalist Samuel Clemens, better known as Mark Twain, and actress and courtesan Lola Montez from Europe. California went from a sleepy outback of Native Americans to a global magnet for commerce.

The Gold Rush accelerated the Native

American population's decline from disease, starvation and the California Genocide. Whole indigenous societies were attacked and pushed off their lands by the gold-seeking Forty-Niners, during the peak of immigration in 1849.

But as fast as it boomed, the Gold Country went bust, leaving behind crumbling ghost towns that either burned down or fell into disrepair and neglect in the years since.

Practically on the verge of demolition shortly before the pandemic, Nevada County has seen a rebirth with the multimillion dollar meticulous renovation of three of its historic gems — The National Exchange Hotel and Nevada Theater in Nevada City, and Holbrooke Hotel in Grass Valley. The beauty, adventure, romance and excitement that all went missing in those fourth-grade textbooks has come back to life.

Santa Barbara-based Acme Hospitality, which owns restaurants like The Lark, Lo-

quita, and Helena Ave. Bakery, and hotels like the Azure Sky in Palm Springs, has come in and resurrected these landmarks to their original splendor.

"We're honored to be stewards of historically and culturally significant properties and are grateful for the opportunity to lovingly restore them using talented local artists, designers, and craftspeople," managing partner Sherry Villanueva tells *L.A. Weekly*.

"We fell in love with the Sierra Foothills, not only for the region's incredible natural beauty or the valuable role it plays in the history of California, but also with the fascinating people who call this place home. We were excited at every discovery we made while initially exploring the area and wanted to share it with travelers far and wide who might otherwise have overlooked these gems. Grass Valley and Nevada City are only a few minutes apart but feel worlds away. Perfect examples of the beauty of small-town America, these diverse communities offer something for almost every type of traveler, from heritage-seeker baby boomers to adventure-hunting millennials. And, of course, we love bringing world-class food, wine and cocktail offerings to all our guests, where we can match the talent of our team with the abundant bounty of local farmers, ranchers, and producers."

With a flight to Sacramento from Los

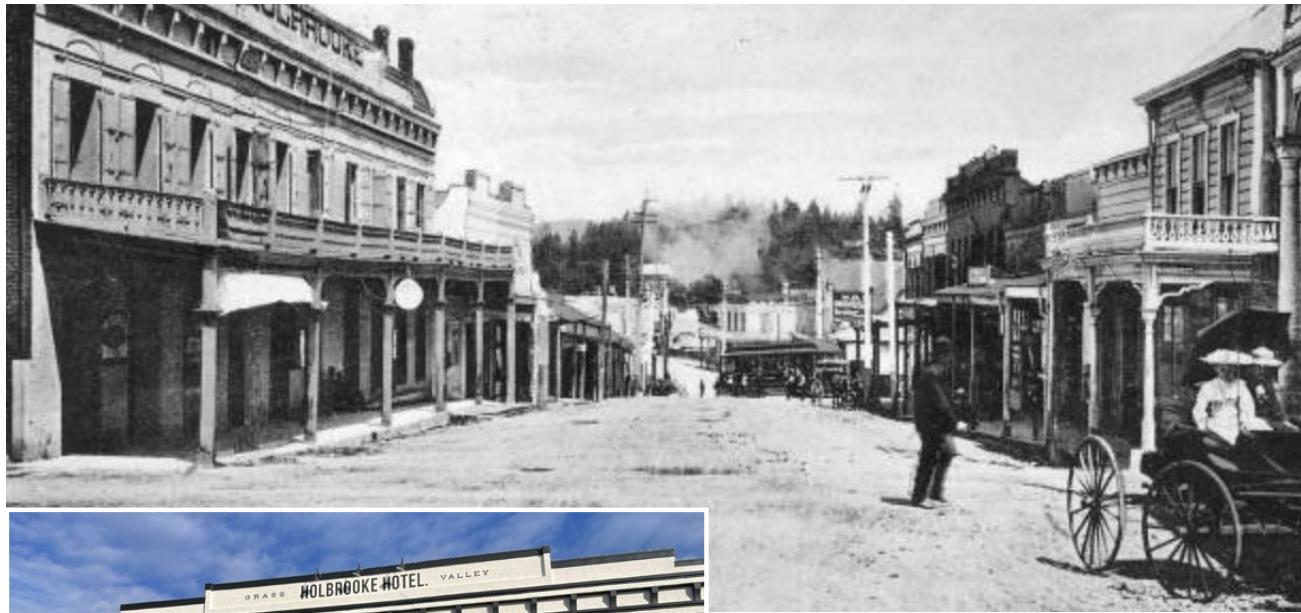


Angeles in just under an hour or by the more scenic route with a six-hour drive time, Nevada County is a romantic destination full of California history with renewed respect given to the Native Americans as well.

After an extensive three year, floor-to-rafter's renovation, the 1850's **National Exchange Hotel** has a new shine, cozy bar and first-class restaurant named after Montez, the illustrious queen of Grass Valley.

The hotel opened on Aug. 26, 1856 at a major stagecoach stop for transient miners on Broad Street. The United States Post Office had its home here until 1942. As an ever-evolving community, the hotel adapted to the needs of the town. Buildings and balconies were added and taken away over the years, rooms were moved and walled off. Room 209, one of the most beautiful rooms off the veranda, was rediscovered behind walls during the renovations and a coffee shop replaced the more formal restaurant. Victorian furniture meticulously collected by the Acme team fills the rooms





and common areas, including a settee used as a prop in *Psycho* that looms at the top of the staircase. And heads-up on the subject of staircases — there's no elevator in the three-story landmark building.

Lola's Dining at the hotel is great for all-day brunch and dinner, and its historic tavern serves seasonal cocktails like the gin-based Diary of a Nobody and a perfect martini. For breakfast, try the short rib hash or mushroom scramble, made with locally farmed fungi. For dinner, go for the lamb shank, shrimp and grits, or fried chicken with kale kimchi and spring onion.

The California Arts Council has formally recognized the downtown area as a Cultural District, so there are many fun

shops and restaurants with diverse cuisines that reflect Nevada City's history, including Chinese.

The real jewel in the crown of the town's restoration is the **Nevada Theater** and Sarah Coleman's captivating murals depicting California.

California's oldest existing theater building, the Nevada Theater, opened in September of 1865, featuring regular performances by Clemens, Jack London and Montez. The stage closed in 1957 and reopened in 1968 when the town rallied and raised funds to resurrect the historic landmark.

During the pandemic in 2021, local artist and muralist Sarah Coleman was commissioned to create a large-scale mural spanning the entire auditorium of the theater, including the ceiling that breathed even more life into the community. The stunning work depicts the origins of California like Chinese lanterns blowing in the wind, imagery of a specific basket of the local Rancheria Nisenan Tribe, plus local Nevada City flora and fauna like oak leaves and acorns.

The 200-seat theater is in



use year-round for both live performance and movies.

An admittedly absorbing stop on the 10-minute drive from Nevada City to Grass Valley that restored my original fourth-grade disinterest in the Gold Rush, was the **Empire Mine State Historic Park**. It's the site of one of the oldest, deepest and richest gold mines in California.

Gold was originally discovered at the location in 1850 and after years of decline, advances in mining technology and major pollution to the area, the mine closed in 1957. While the interactive tour of the mine itself is interesting, the idyllic surroundings on 856 acres of forested backcountry with 14 miles of trails are open daily and a tour of the original owner's summer estate is a rare look into how the rich lived during the Gold Rush. The cottage contains all the original furnishings collected over the years by the William Bowers Bourn family that owned the mine.

**The Holbrooke Hotel** in Grass Valley, also lovingly restored by the Acme team, is a more rustic and masculine version of its sister project in Nevada City.

Game trophies line the walls of the din-



ing room that lead into the Golden Gate Saloon, one of the longest operating barrooms west of the Mississippi River, serving classic and seasonal cocktails, regional and international wines, local beer, and live music nights. For breakfast, heal your hangover with the classic Holbrooke breakfast of two eggs, crispy potatoes, housemade sourdough or wheat toast, choice of fruit, and bacon or pork sausage made from scratch in house.

On Friday, Jan. 19, the underground Iron Door will reopen (legend has it served both brothel and speakeasy), which was recently reimagined with warm amber lighting on original stone walls, plush banquettes and a custom bar set against original metal doors that once led to a series of underground tunnels.

Originally built as the saloon in 1852, the Holbrooke has hosted famous guests over the years including U.S. Presidents Ulysses S. Grant, Grover Cleveland, Benjamin Harrison and James Garfield. Authors Clemens and Bret Harte spent time here, and rumor has it that the infamous highwayman Black Bart was a guest, sometime between stagecoach robberies and writing poems. Female entertainers like Montez, Lotta Crabtree and Emma Nevada sa-shayed regularly through the lobby.

For a rustic and restorative side trip for a picnic on your way back to the Sacramento Airport, take in the beauty of the spring wildflowers and covered bridge at the level and easy **Buttermilk Bend Trail** along the Yuba River.

*The National Exchange Hotel, 211 Broad St., Nevada City 530-362-7605*

*The Nevada Theater, 401 Broad St., Nevada City 530-265-6161*

*Empire Mine State Historic Park, 10791 E. Empire St., Grass Valley 530-273-8522*

*The Holbrooke Hotel, 212 W. Main St., Grass Valley 530-460-4078*

*Buttermilk Bend Trail, 17660 Pleasant Valley Road, Penn Valley 530-432-2546*





## CANNABIS

# NO LINK FOUND BETWEEN MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION AND PSYCHOSIS CASES SPIKING

A Team Of Canadian Researchers Found The Mental Health Arguments Against Legalization Didn't Materialize

BY JIMI DEVINE



**T**he idea of a mass hysteria from modern superweed cracking people's fragile minds is often peddled against ideas of personal freedom, medical use, or just the safety of regulated markets. But did that happen anywhere?

Mental health episodes being triggered by cannabis are certainly a thing that should never be pushed under the rug, but you also should take a deep breath before stressing too hard. A new analysis out of Canada found it might

not be something we need to be as concerned about happening in massive waves following the implementation of legal cannabis, at least in the data they looked at following Canada's legalization of marijuana.

Dr. Kelly Anderson, principal investigator for the Canadian Institutes of Health Research's Project Grant from 2021-2022, led the team of 14 researchers that authored the analysis titled *Impact of Non-medical Cannabis Legalization With Market Restrictions*

on Health Service Use and Incident Cases of Psychotic Disorder in Ontario, Canada

"There is concern that non-medical cannabis legalization in Canada may have population-level impacts on psychotic disorders," the authors noted. "We sought to examine changes in health service use and incident cases of psychotic disorder following cannabis legalization, during a period of tight restrictions on retail stores and product types."

The team started collecting data from all over Ontario between January 2014 to March of 2020. It was a deep cross

evidence of any increases in the use of health services or incidents of psychotic disorders. The researchers noted they did find an increasing trend in substance-induced psychotic disorders over the whole time frame they looked at, but they didn't find it to be particularly associated with cannabis.

The authors emphasized in their conclusion that more time is needed to keep an eye on the issue.

"A longer post-legalization observation period, which includes expansion of the commercial cannabis market, is needed to fully understand the population-level impacts of non-medical can-

**"THERE IS CONCERN THAT NON-MEDICAL CANNABIS LEGALIZATION IN CANADA MAY HAVE POPULATION-LEVEL IMPACTS ON PSYCHOTIC DISORDERS"**

nabis legalization," the authors noted. "Thus, it would be premature to conclude that the legalization of non-medical cannabis did not lead to increases in health service use and incident cases of psychotic disorder."

The authors went on to note this was happening across all demographics. They said they did not find evidence of differences in different socio-demographic groups when it came to psychotic disorders across the pre- and post-legalization periods. They argued that suggests there is no difference for key population subgroups.

So what does all this mean to the wider legalization debate. Research that isn't based in the U.S. doesn't get its fair shake from the FDA always. This is why all the research on CBD out of Europe hasn't led to a faster rescheduling. Yet most Americans have agreed cannabis has some medical value for over a decade, and especially since the relief all those kids suffering from Dravet's Syndrome getting relief was shared with the public.

This forced the anti-cannabis crowd to get even darker with the threat of psychosis impacting numerous people. But now we know that's simply not the case. And it wasn't some random term paper, it was research led by one of Canada's top public health sector academics. [E]

section of data that started well before legalization and ended well after implementation. From there, the data was further broken down to psychosis-related outpatient visits, emergency department visits, hospitalizations, and inpatient length of stay, as well as incident cases of psychotic disorders. The age range they were looking for the cases in was 14 to 60.

The researchers found that in that 17-month window following legalization kicking off in Canada, there was no



MUSIC

# UNDERGROUND VELVET

Rocker *Miss Velvet* Has Set Her Physical Journey To Music

BY BRETT CALLWOOD

**L**os Angeles-based rocker Miss Velvet spent years honing her craft in her native New York before making the move west.

"I did my first real show in a living room down on the Lower East Side," she says. "And that really began my full musical career. I did Interlochen Arts Academy, I did Manhattan School of Music for a year. And I was studying all the classical repertoire. So I kind of started in classical music, and I did a little bit of opera. But every teacher I worked with was like, 'This voice has a lot of depth, has a lot of nuance, and we hear a rasp in there. So I think you're rock 'n' roll!'"

And so it was eight years ago that Miss Velvet fully settled into her rock 'n' roll journey — a journey that would take her from one creative hub (in New York City) to another (in Los Angeles).

"My husband and I spoke about it when the pandemic was going down, like in the first three months, and I think I had always had this dream of the style of music and the musicianship that I loved," Miss Velvet says. "I know so much of it was discovered in and based out of California. The Eagles and Joni Mitchell. And my husband was like, 'Let's fuckin' do it. Like what's stopping us?'"

Despite her strong sense of loyalty toward New York, she moved west with a supportive spouse by her side and, very soon after her arrival, she met songwriting partner Esjay Jones.

"She was one of the first people my management introduced me to out here and it was like, here we go," she says. "And so I felt like it was all bubbling up for a reason and I think whenever you are about ready to make a huge, seismic shift or pivot in your life, you always feel like it's really heavy and powerful. Sometimes not in the best way. But I think once you kind of like push through that uncomfortableness, things can unravel in such a mystical and beautiful way. And that's kind of what happened here."

Jones is a celebrated and respected Los Angeles-based musician, originally from South Africa and, as it turns out, she doesn't do anything in half measures.

"I said, 'I want to do this like the old school bands,'" Miss Velvet says. "Like, 'I want you to live with me and write this record with me where you're seeing a lot of the topics we talk about. In this record are the transition of post-pandemic and motherhood to rock star, back to mother and how we navigate that, and the sexual expression of a woman, in a mature state.' All these aspects that I wanted to come through on the record, she was like, 'Then I need to live with you — I need to see this happen in real



time.' So I feel like that initial stage of her living with me for two and a half months and, we have a little studio downstairs, us being able to run up and down the steps and take a breather

outside in nature or walk to the beach with my girls and then come back and finish writing a song, it just had this very free feeling. It translated so well on the record."

Her whole experience has been detailed on the new album *Traveler*. An autobiographical body of work set to unmistakably classic rock tunes, *Traveler* sounds both deeply personal and wonderfully relatable. Here in L.A., she says, the rock that she loves is still alive and well.

"I feel like in L.A., rock 'n' roll is so alive and thriving here," she says. "I feel like it's pretty woven into the DNA. At the shows that I've begun to play here, the audience is so accepting of that style of music, and they want it. It was almost just like this warm, welcoming hug for that genre specifically, for classic rock."

*Traveler* might not be a concept album in the traditional sense, but there is an overarching theme — one of the physical journey traveled to L.A., but also the mental, spiritual element of being a traveler and the changes that can deliver in your own life.

"That's why the title track and the name of the album is *Traveler*, and we explore all these themes," Miss Velvet says. "We can all be dreamers and we can change our life, change our place, change our luck. And that's exactly what I needed at that moment."

The first single from the album is also called "Traveler."

"That song really is about making the move from my previous life," she says. "And I think not just from New York, but my single life, and moving into that next phase of being a wife and being a mother to two kids, and how I'm going to straddle that between, you know, home and on the road and being that kind of an artist. I've gotten a lot of young moms and older moms and parents and stuff, reaching out to me being like, 'You know, I needed this.' I think there's this big stereotype of like, hey, we have kids and our life stops. And, and I think that's what's been so kind of inspiring, to get these messages from mothers and women that are maybe about to enter into that."

That's important, and it's proof that artists don't have to reach Taylor Swift levels of success to have a positive impact and maybe aid in the smashing of a glass ceiling or two.

"The feedback and the comments have just been really overwhelmingly beautiful and poignant," Miss Velvet says. "I think it's just so special when you put something out there into the wild. And I consider this another baby. I'm just putting that baby out there and people are getting it."

There's much more to come from Miss Velvet in 2024, including tours and more recording. Now that she's here in L.A., this Velvet is part of the furniture.

*Miss Velvet's Traveler is out now.* [L]





ART

# JÓNSI'S AMBIENT SCULPTURAL SENSORIA

A new Los Angeles exhibition highlights the artist's love of multisensory composition

BY SHANA NYS DAMBROT

If you have experienced the intense, ambient, cathartic soundscape of a Sigur Rós live show, then you already know a little bit about what it's lead vocalist Jónsi gets up to in his visual art practice. Not only about his sonic

aesthetic fusing human, atmospheric, and technological voices, poetically manipulated sounds, fibrillated rhythms, and cognitive emotion—but also the integral role of light, movement, pattern, and optical frequency operating in the music's enhanced visual

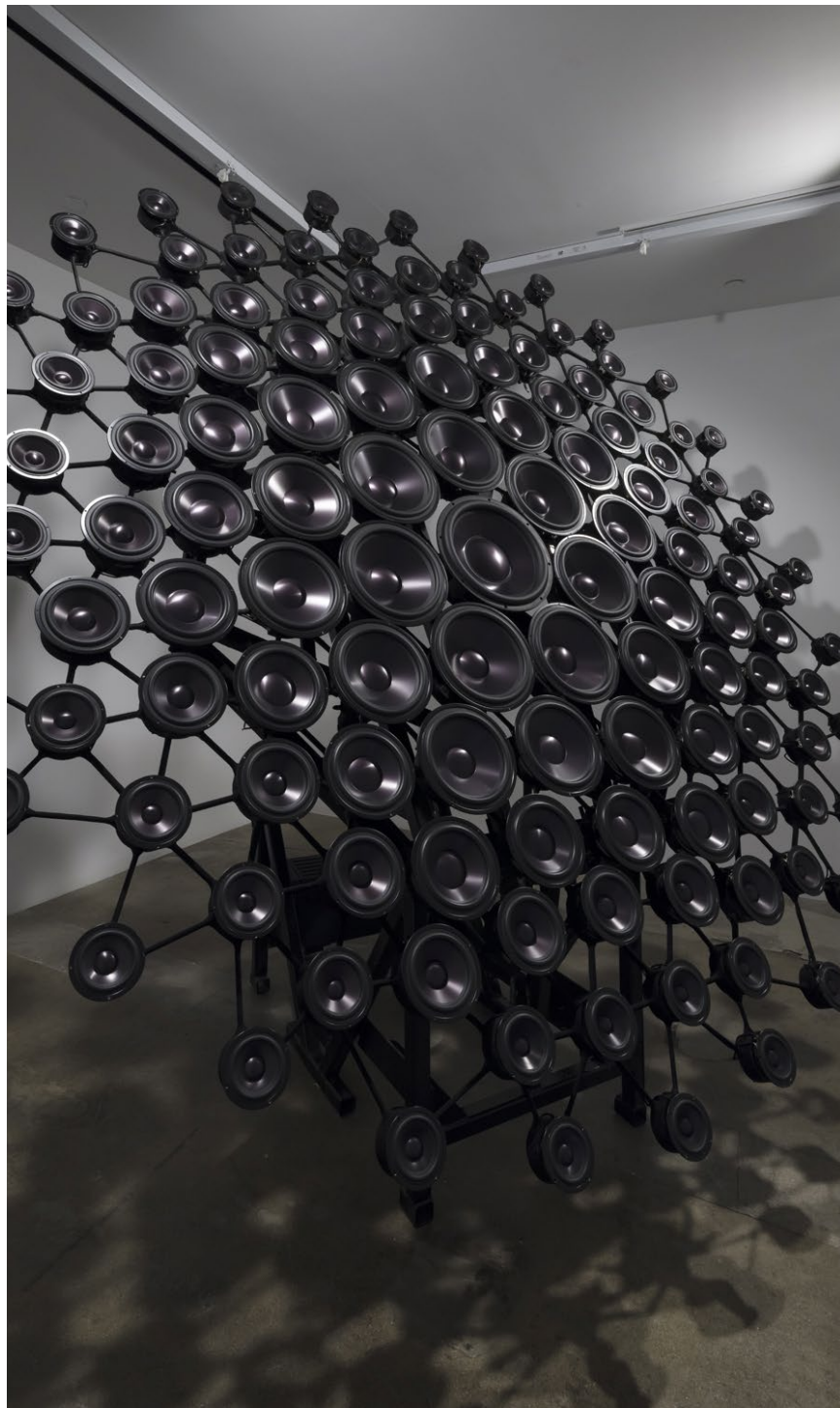
field. What might be surprising is how elegantly these ideas translate from the arena to the gallery.

In his current exhibition at Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, Jónsi (who lives and works in Los Angeles) channels

his wide-ranging ideas into three finite sculptural objects—well, two sculptures and an immersive installation—that each contain and project sound, light, and provocative scent in experiential objects that address multiple senses and dimensions, imparting captivating physical experiences and implying further metaphysical philosophies. Like the historical Light and Space artists James Turrell and Robert Irwin whose legacy can be felt throughout the presentation, Jónsi is primarily interested in the mechanics and effects of the literal, physical act of *seeing*; unlike those forebears, he extends that physiological psychic field to include the acts of hearing and smelling as well. There is also an infused fermented and probably hallucinogenic vetiver root elixir available, for the brave.

*Vox* means “voice” and the largest of





the three works creates a synesthetic suspended space in which the sound of Jónsi's natural voice mixes freely with digital and AI-generated "voices" and in turn sparks the algorithm for a 360-degree pulsating light show—projected inside a big black box with lightly billowing smoke and the strong smell of pungent vetiver grass. As the sounds slip fluidly between ethereal almost-lyrics and circuit-bending scrapes and bangs, the colors and motions perform peripheral dissonance and occasional

syncing up. An unexpectedly poignant emotional response accompanies the curiosity and a growing sense that the box is alive.

Another gallery features an imposing, curved blossom or mandala-like standing sculpture—an array of more than 100 smooth, perfectly round brassy speakers of various sizes with a distinctly botanical and also extraterrestrial presence. *Silent sigh (dark)* choreographs different electronic channels which prompt a gently flowing distur-



bance across the speakers, responding to their own output like a breeze ruffling a lake. The sound here is subtle and less human, but the breath of the almost-living sculpture is affecting and meditative; the experience of its apparatus and the direct translation of surreal sound into a solid, moving object feels like science fiction, and maybe like it's a trap.

A third work combines certain elements of the others, as *Var (safespace)* creates a draped cloak of micro-speakers hung from the ceiling like a tent. Encouraged to walk not only around

but crucially underneath the canopy, viewers find an ASMR-like atmosphere, paired with the scent of freshly cut grass. Again, the organic sensations and high-tech forms generate a cognitive paradox at the heart of the experience—but ultimately it's in the pleasing friction of that plural space where the magic of the show takes hold.

*Vox is on view at Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, 1010 Highland Ave., Hollywood, through February 3; tanyabonakdargallery.com.* [A]

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