

LAW WEEKLY

FASHION WITH AN OLD
HOLLYWOOD FEEL

WOODY ALLEN TROPES,
BUT MAKE IT FRENCH

BREWS, BAO, AND CUBAN
FLAVORS HIT THE MARK

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The Jewish Culture of Hollywoodland
Gets a Permanent Home at The Academy Museum

BY MICHELE STUEVEN

KANACH OF KANAK FEELS THE RAW, UNFILTERED EMOTIONS OF 'JOHN LENNON/PLASTIC ONO BAND'

My Favorite Album: Tom Kanach of New Jersey rockers Kanak told us about his love for Lennon's classic solo debut.

BY BRETT CALLWOOD



Tom Kanach: Selecting just one record that has significantly impacted my life feels totally impossible, as there are hundreds of records that I cannot live without. Among my personal favorites are Radiohead's *OK Computer*, the Beach Boys' *Pet Sounds*, Elliot Smith's *Figure 8*, Wilco's *Summer Teeth*, the Zombies' *Odessey and Oracle*, the Beatles' *Revolver*, the Dead Boys' *Young, Loud and Snotty*, and the Rolling Stones' *Exile on Main Street*.

Seeing these records all listed together, I realized that they share a common thread. They each have continuity, presenting a synchronized theme and atmosphere. Each song lives within a specific mood or topic, rendering these albums cohesive

journeys rather than just a collection of the band's best songs amassed over time. While there's nothing wrong with the latter approach, these albums, with their thematic unity, resonate with me in a unique way.

Each song is a perfectly placed piece of the puzzle, seemingly penned during a singular manic session, that captures a snapshot of the artist's experiences or emotions, compelling them to unleash a torrent of creative expression.

For me, the pinnacle of thematic albums is John Lennon's Plastic Ono Band. Unlike many concept albums, Lennon's work offers a raw, unfiltered glimpse into his inner struggles during its creation. Its honesty is striking, devoid of elaborate metaphors or fictional narratives. Upon my initial listen,

I was struck by its sincere vulnerability, with the sparse music perfectly mirroring Lennon's emotional journey. It was John ripped open for inspection.

Learning that John Lennon, the only person that I ever idolized and who symbolized musical perfection to me, was grappling with life's challenges was both surprising and comforting. It made me feel less alone and inspired me to embrace honesty in my own creative endeavors.

In extending my gratitude to John Lennon for offering this candid glimpse into his world, I acknowledge the invaluable gift of authenticity he imparted to the younger me, as well as countless others, toward the pursuit of truth in their craft.

Kanak's On the Outside EP is out now.

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Image courtesy of United Artists Theatre.

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MICHELINE PITT MAKES CLOTHES INSPIRED BY HER FAVORITE FLICKS

BY RACHEL SANOFF / BUST

Los Angeles-based fashion designer Micheline Pitt thinks clothing should be an extension of who you are and what you love—the weirder and bolder, the better. Inspired by what she loves—1950s bad girls, cinema, and horror—Pitt has created two brands that offer ethically and locally produced garments combining her favorite things.

Vixen is a vintage-style brand (with a store in Los Angeles) that makes “good things for bad girls.” For Pitt, that means clothing that empowers women to break rules and dress however they want—from sparkling, hot-pink dresses fit for a bombshell to faux-leather ensembles to curve-hugging leopard prints. Pitt has also collaborated with studios on playful, film-themed collections, including *Beetlejuice*, *It*, and *Labyrinth*. “The bubblegum, cartoonish elements of some designs come from my previous life as an animator,” Pitt says. “I’m creating vibrant, often silly things that are fun to wear and also extremely sexy.” With her co-designer and business partner, Lynh Haaga, Pitt additionally launched La Femme en Noir, a line that offers lingerie and delicates for the “glamorously gothic”—including a collection inspired by Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*.

A childhood spent thrift-store shopping and watching classic cinema with her grandfather started Pitt on her artistic journey. Knowing that her family couldn’t afford trendy clothes, Pitt frequented secondhand stores and flea markets. Then, “like most rebellious, angry teens,” she says, “I dove fully into the punk and goth scene.” With her added exposure to silver screen sirens, it’s easy to see how the two brands were born. “I watched so many glorious old movies starring Jayne Mansfield and Marilyn Monroe, fascinated by their clothed bodies,” Pitt says. “I had never seen the female form look so feminine and so powerful at the same time.”

With both brands, Pitt continues to celebrate femininity in all shapes and sizes. Every single item comes in sizes XS to 4X, and Pitt never alters silhouettes to provide more or less “coverage” depending on size. “I always thought it was ridiculous when a clothing brand wouldn’t offer a crop top or a wiggle dress in all sizes,” Pitt says. “I know our clothes won’t fit every single body type, but I’d like to think we’re filling a gap in the market. We have so many loyal customers who all show off their beautiful figures in our clothing.”

In fact, Pitt has even heard from teachers and librarians who find ways to incorporate her bold designs into their regular work wardrobes. “There are a lot of us weird girls out there in the world,” she says, “and I feel lucky I get to make clothing for them.” **LA**



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SUSAN DELANEY



THE JEWISH CULTURE OF HOLLYWOODLAND GETS A PERMANENT HOME AT THE ACADEMY MUSEUM

BY MICHELE STUEVEN



Hollywoodland: Jewish Founders and the Making of a Movie Capital will be the The Academy Museum of Motion Pictures' first permanent exhibition, on view starting on Sunday, May 19. Presented in English and Spanish, it tells the origin story of filmmaking in early 20th-century Los Angeles, spotlighting the impact

of the predominantly Jewish filmmakers whose establishment of the American film studio system transformed Los Angeles into a global epicenter of cinema.

According to the Academy Museum the exhibition's opening day will feature two public programs, a Book Signing with Neal Gabler of *An Empire of their Own: How the Jews Invented Hollywood*

in the Ted Mann Theater Lobby, as well as a Curator Conversation, Hollywoodland: Jewish Founders and the Making of a Movie Capital with Neal Gabler in conversation with Dara Jaffe, moderated by Academy Museum President Jacqueline Stewart in the Ted Mann Theater.

Located in the museum's LAIKA Gallery, Hollywoodland is an immersive ex-


hibition chronicling the studio system's evolution during the early 20th century. It details how the American movie industry — built predominately by Jewish immigrants — transformed Los Angeles into the mythological concept of "Hollywood" that prevails today, as well as the complex legacy that the studio system leaves behind.

The exhibition consists of three distinct parts:

Studio Origins is an exploration of the founding of Hollywood's original eight major film studios (often referred to as "the majors") and their respective studio heads.

Los Angeles: From Film Frontier to Industry Town, 1902–1929 is an immersive projection experience where visitors trace the evolving landscape of Los Angeles alongside the advancement of the movie industry. Consisting of an animated tabletop map of Los Angeles and choreographed projection screen, this section of the exhibition features a timeline structured around a series of chronologically revealed lo-

cations relevant to the city's early film industry, such as filming locations, studio locations and cultural landmarks. It also will address lesser-known stories of independent producers active in early 1900s Los Angeles.

From the Shtetl to the Studio: The Jewish Story of Hollywood is a short-form documentary, narrated by TCM host and author Ben Mankiewicz that illustrates the experiences of the Jewish immigrants and first-generation Jewish Americans who were primarily responsible for building the Hollywood studio system. The exhibition is designed for visitors to enter and exit through the same door, so that they can experience these three sections in any order. 



COURTESY OF ACADEMY MUSEUM



Still from Ben Hur

COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL CITY

ENTERTAINMENT

'COUP DE CHANCE' IS A REHASH OF WOODY ALLEN'S TROPES AND TICS

BY MICHAEL ATKINSON



You can be forgiven for wondering if the new Woody Allen movie, *Coup de Chance*, is not actually a new Woody Allen movie. (Even the words “new Woody Allen movie,” in 2024, elicit the kind of dread foreboding Oscar Wilde has reportedly said to have felt on hearing the statement “I had a very interesting dream last night.”) It’s in French, for one thing, but what seems like the unavoidable takeaway is that the film feels like a spawn of AI: Prompt the

aggregating/homogenizing cyber-Moloch of your choice with something as simple as “Woody Allen jealousy drama, in French,” and push Enter. What you’d probably get is what we have in the film: a tissue-thin riff on Woodian reflexes, clichés, tendencies, shortcuts, and cheap ideas, glossed over with an Uncanny Valley unreality, as predictable as a cookie mold and as free of human contact as a hologram.

But then, the now 88-year-old auteur has in effect been his own AI for more

than a quarter-century, robbing from himself and repeating and recycling his short shelf of plots, characters, and jokes far beyond the point of diminishing returns and into an anemic space of near-nothingness. With hardly a single convincing image or line in it, *Coup de Chance* plays like the 20th photocopy of *Café Society*, *Cassandra’s Dream*, and *Match Point*, themselves faded rips of threads from *Crimes and Misdemeanors*, *Hannah and Her Sisters*, etc. It’s like one

of those “perfect” AI-spat model shots, bled down from thousands of other images: the too-shiny skin and empty eyes of no real person at all.

The plot could fit on a matchbook: Luscious Lou de Laâge is stopped on a Paris street by old schoolmate Niels Schneider, who’s “a writer,” and who mentions over a dozen times that he had a crush on her when they were younger. But she’s married to shady financier/control freak Melvil Poupaud. Despite her extreme wealth — the couple’s apartment is typical Woodian real-estate porn, complete with a gym and a room devoted entirely to Poupaud’s lavish toy train table — de Laâge’s doe-eyed heroine falls for the tousle-haired artiste, who of course lives in a garret. Poupaud’s glowering alpha then gets suspicious and hires a detective. Things go south, mostly offscreen, in ways that will be as familiar to you as the wallpaper facing the toilet in your home. There isn’t much more to it. Not to spoil a party or anything, but I also must take encrypted note of the story’s climactic moment, which arbitrarily involves characters we’ve never met, and puts the term “deus ex machina” to shame.

Scrupulously humor-free — unless you find lines like “There’s no gift like the gift of poetry!” funny — Allen’s film doesn’t contain a single dialogue exchange that isn’t sodden with obvious exposition, a single character who isn’t a cliché, or a single performative moment that doesn’t feel like a hurry-it-up table read. The boxes for every hoary old American idea about the posh life in France are checked: frog legs, walks through the Tuileries, fabulous wine with lunch, the vine-covered hunting lodge, the adorable garret.

It’s all talk, of course, and Allen’s screenplay, again coming off like a chatbot that doesn’t know when to stop, is comprised almost entirely of bland (and recycled) aphorisms about love and luck and constantly reiterated facts about the persons involved, often coming out of the mouths of ancillary characters at parties: The normally pleasant de Laâge just “isn’t herself,” Poupaud is mysterious and ruthless but devoted to his wife, Schneider never stopped thinking about de Laâge. Even the cinematography, performed by 83-year-old Vittorio Storaro in the always-dusk yellows and oranges he used in *Wonder Wheel*, seems machine-conjured — ripping off the master’s analog magic-hour masterpieces of the ’70s (*The Conformist*, *1900*, *Apocalypse Now*) and scrambling them with a good dose of Thomas Kincaid. Everything is redundant, including this review.

Here’s some optional homework: Look at Allen’s 16-feature run from *Annie Hall* (1977) to *Husbands and Wives* (1992), and watch the one you remember least instead. It might make your April. **LA**

WHAT'S UP POPPING UP

Havana Nights Are Back And Chorizo For St. Jordi

BY MICHELE STUEVEN

On Wednesday, April 24, the Fairmont Century Plaza debuted the Havana Nights pop-up experience. The property's popular winter chalets will be transformed into an outdoor Cuban-inspired cocktail lounge reminiscent of 1950s Havana.

Through a partnership with SelvaRey Rum, the cocktail lounge will serve a curated menu of Mojitos, Cuba Libres, and more, featuring the premium rum brand co-owned by Bruno Mars and the sustainable rum distillery. The dining menu from Executive Chef Ramon Bojorquez will offer a twist on Cuban classics like plantains, croquettes, and Cubano sandwiches. Also expect DJ nights, Cuban band performances, mixology evenings, game nights, cigar rolling, and more.

From now through Saturday, April 28, all Telefèric Barcelona locations will celebrate St. Jordi with a special menu offering chorizo bao featuring a steamed bao bun filled with chorizo, cheese and honey. St Jordi, known as La Diada de Sant Jordi in Catalan, celebrates the legend of Saint George slaying a dragon to save a princess. It's a day full of love and connection, similar to Valentine's Day in America. In Spain, it's tradition to exchange roses and books with loved ones and colleagues, honoring medieval times and literary legends like Shakespeare, Miguel de Cervantes, and Inca Garcilaso.

As the official hotel partner for BeachLife Music Festival, which takes place just steps from the hotel, Portofino will host BeachLife Brunch, a ticketed event open to the public on Saturday, May 4, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., in the Pacific Ballroom, with a buffet that includes bottomless mimosas, and live acoustic tunes by Mark Castrillion. Tickets begin at \$45/adult. The Portofino Hotel & Marina will host BeachLife Festival after-parties on Friday and Saturday at 10 p.m., for festival-goers age 21 and older. There will be a DJ in the newly renovated lobby that features the Portofino Pours Taps Wall all night long.

BeachLife ticket holders can RSVP for free now until next week, available on Airtable. After next week, After-party tickets are available for \$50 each.

This Asian Pacific American Heritage Month in May, the Japanese American Cultural & Community Center (JACCC) will host the return of its celebrated Rising Chef Series — a dinner series created in partnership with the House of Suntory convening emerging Asian American chefs in a celebration of food and culture.

Starting on Monday, April 30, through May, the JACCC Culinary Center will open its doors to three immersive dinner experiences, featuring a five-course prix-fixe menu and three signature House of Suntory cocktail pairings inspired by each Rising chef's culture and experiences. The pop-up will run from Tuesday to Wednesday through three weeks in May, with two 90-minute seatings each night. Tickets for the 21 and older experience are available at bit.ly/risingchefseries3. This year's lineup includes H Woo Lee, Debi Min and Peter Duong.

The 2024 Buellton Brew Fest returns on Saturday, May 4, from 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., at RiverView Park. This year's event will bring the Star Wars spirit and guests are encouraged to bring their best Star Wars costumes. The lucky costume winners will be announced on stage.

The Brew Festival will feature more than 50 breweries, wineries and spirits including Figueroa Mountain Brewing Co., Agua Santa Mexican Lager, Firestone Walker Brewing Company, and more. There also will be live entertainment by Central Coast residents Molly Ringwald Project and True Zion. The Molly Ringwald Project will have everyone reeling from nostalgia with its '80s tribute songs. True Zion will bring fresh-roots reggae to the festival. Put your gaming skills to the test with the mega-sized beer pong and the cornhole. Bring your own lawn chairs and blankets — there will be a wide variety of food trucks on-site to satisfy your taste buds. 🍷



LAWEEKLY CLASSIFIEDS

EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

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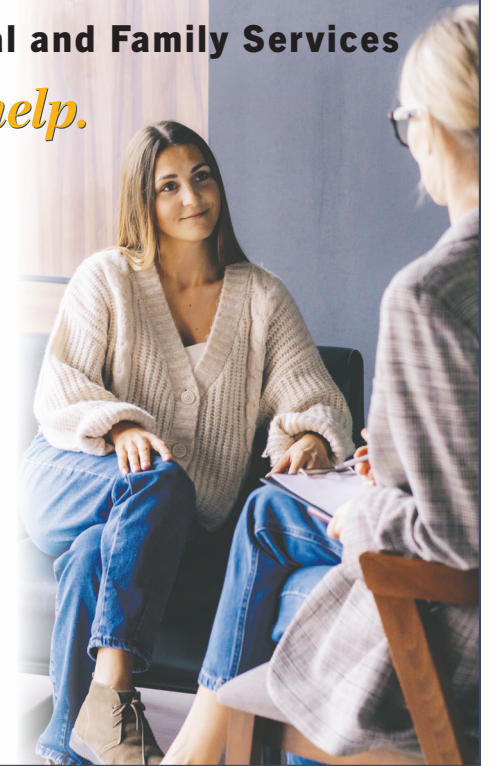
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