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TARZANA'S
ICONIC

BEA'S
BAKERY

BY MICHELE STUEVEN



MUSIC

BEST EX FEELS STRONGER WITH WEAKERTHANS

Best Ex Feels Stronger with Weakerthans: Mariel Loveland of NYC-based indie-pop band Best Ex rhapsodizes about a Weakerthans gem

BY BRETT CALLWOOD



Mariel Loveland

BEST EX

Mariel Loveland: To me, the best albums are albums that age with you. I think back to my childhood, begging my mom to drive me to the sort of suburban strip mall that was one of the few places teenagers could loiter away from our parents. Back then, the world seemed so big and our options were limited: we could throw rocks by the creek if the weather was nice, spend hours watching each other chain-smoke in the local diner, hang out in a basement that belonged to a friend whose over-worked single mother was rarely home, or plant ourselves in Borders Books. We often chose the latter, spending our Saturday afternoons parsing through Nylon and NME, pulling out albums to sample on the in-store headphones.

It was there that I discovered *Reconstruction Site* by the Weakerthans. I was,

at the time, on the precipice of adulthood. I had not yet experienced loss beyond burying a carnival goldfish in the backyard, but I was also an anxious child acutely aware of that eventuality. In many ways, the album (almost entirely themed around grief and illness) felt like a guidebook to the pain of adulthood, but it also served as an homage to the forgotten moments of youth — the speaking to siblings through heating vents or crawling around adult feet at family gatherings.

In one of my earliest memories, I recall sitting at the dinner table with my family, hiding Flintstones vitamins under my napkin, and trying my best to ignore the sinking feeling in my gut. I didn't know where it came from. Maybe it was the realization that we are separate from our loved ones and truly navigate life alone. Maybe it was a fear of the inevitability of

time. I called it, in my limited vocabulary, growing up. I never heard anyone describe it until I listened to the title track:

*His father laughed and talked on the
long ride home
And his mother laughed and talked
on the long ride home
And he thought about how everyone
dies someday
And when tomorrow gets here where
will yesterday be
And fell asleep in his brand-new
winter coat*

Throughout the years, I grew up alongside the album. In college, I'd stare at the sun peeking through the gray sky and recall "A New Name for Everything." It felt like insurance that time doesn't just take things away, it can also bring you clarity, understanding, and direction.

When I entered the world as a working adult in the midst of a historic recession, I became a cat owner chained to my bed with sadness and unemployment. I wondered, does my cat feel like the cat did in "Plea from a Cat Named Virtute?" The thought was enough to pull me to the screen door and sit with her watching the birds chirp (especially because, by then, I knew how the story ended). Years later, I knelt on a dirty hospital floor and prayed over beeping machines like in "(Hospital Vespers)." The eventuality became the now.

Today, more than 20 years after the album's release, I still find new meaning in the songs — especially in the sonnets hidden in the album's interludes. I recently came across *Pitchfork's* review, which said the album would be best relegated to "a smarmy Ivy League college radio show." Perhaps there is a glimmer of truth in that because, as a girl who was once president of the high school poetry club (with the popularity to match that role), the album has always made me feel like less of an outsider. It always reflected the world back to me in the way I saw it. It's one of the few albums I can say truly possesses a lifetime.

Best Ex's With a Smile album is out now. 📀

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LAURA E. WHITE FOR STREET MEDIA



WHAT'S UP POPPING UP

Catalina Wine Fest and Scuba Diving Downtown

BY MICHELE STUEVEN



Harbor Reef Restaurant, Catalina

Beat the heat and head out to the island. Catalina Island Company and Avalon Rotary will host the 22nd annual [Two Harbors Wine Fest](#) showcasing local and imported wines along with live entertainment in Catalina Island's rustic west end village on Saturday, June 22. The festival will feature a silent auction, live music, complimentary appetizers, and tastings from various wineries.

Tickets for the event are on sale now, offering various options from general admission to specialty VIP packages. General admission grants access to live entertainment, wine tastings, appetizers, a souvenir wine glass, and entry to the Avalon Rotary Silent Auction. Avalon Rotary Club provides support to strengthen connections to friends and neighbors, taking action through service, including an annual scholarship program for graduating seniors at Avalon K-12 School. For a more exclusive experience, VIP tickets and group packages provide additional perks like early access to wine tastings and a private cash bar along with add-ons including lounge chairs and furnished palapas.

Then on Saturday September 14, beer lovers can join in the festivities at the [Two Harbors Brew Fest](#). The event will feature tastings from more than 20 breweries along with complimentary appetizers, a limited-edition keepsake beer glass, access to Lion Club's silent auction, and live entertainment. Proceeds from the auction benefit local island charities and scholarships or the Avalon Lions Club Scholarship Fund. Each graduate from Avalon High School is awarded a merit-based Lions Club Scholarship to the school of their choice.

And in case you want to do a little scuba diving near the casino on Catalina the [Hotel Figueroa](#) is offering weekly SCUBA classes in the hotel's pool led by master diver and scuba expert, Beth Beltramo of the Los Angeles-based and female-owned PADI outfit, [Eco Dive Center](#).

Every Tuesday evening at 6pm, starting this week through Tuesday, September 24 guests can sign up for two-hour introductory sessions with PADI-certified experts for an immersive pool experience. Each scuba session costs \$199 per person



Scuba Classes at Hotel Figueroa

ECO DIVE CENTER



Saltie Girl cold lobster roll

MIKE COTRONE



Slice House's Popeye Pizza

JULIANN TANG

with groups capped at eight participants led by Beltramo and will teach divers the SCUBA basics including how to become weightless and how to use SCUBA gear, and other basic skills and safety rules. All equipment will be provided, just bring a bathing suit and a PMA (positive mental attitude)! Courses can be booked directly through [Eco Dive Center](#).

Dogtown Coffee, located in Fairmont Miramar Hotel & Bungalows in Santa Monica is partnering with [GRLSWIRL](#), a pioneering all-female skateboarding collective and non-profit dedicated to unifying women globally by cultivating an authentic skateboarding community with a special "GRLSWIRL Latte".

Launching on Thursday, June 13 and available for a three-month run, the limited-edition "GRLSWIRL Latte" will donate \$1 from every latte sold going directly to support GRLSWIRL's empowering initiatives, featuring a unique honey lavender creation, designed to celebrate the shared roots and community spirit of Dogtown Coffee and GRLSWIRL.

[Slice House by Tony Gemignani](#), a pizzeria concept led by the 13-time world pizza champion, is coming to Burbank this summer, located at 108 East Palm Avenue along Downtown Burbank's Palm Plaza across from the famed bronze statue of Batman. The pizzeria will welcome guests to experience award-winning

pizza by the 13-time world champion in a fast casual setting. The new restaurant is currently hiring across all positions and is expected to bring more than 50 new full- and part-time jobs to the Burbank community, serving New York, Sicilian, Grandma, and Detroit style pizzas – available by the slice or whole pizza. Gluten-free, vegan, and vegetarian options will be available, as well as fresh pasta, wings, salads, and regular lunch specials. The pizza hot spot, which will also debut a special happy hour offering, will have indoor seating for 60 people and outdoor seating for 20 people within its private patio at the front of the restaurant; in addition, it will offer takeout, online ordering, and delivery. Slice House Burbank will be open seven days a week from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., and later for select movie premieres and events.

In celebration of National Lobster Day on Saturday, June 15, [Saltie Girl](#) will be giving away 20 free lobster rolls throughout the weekend. Guests who order a lobster roll and receive a plate with a sticker on the bottom will receive their roll for free. The roll can be ordered hot or cold and is served with housemade salt and vinegar potato chips. Saltie Girl is open on Saturdays from 11 a.m. until 11 p.m. and Sundays from 11 a.m. until 10 p.m. Reservations are available on [Resy](#) and walk-ins are welcome. 🍷

TARZANA'S ICONIC BEA'S BAKERY THRIVES ON A MULTICULTURAL TASTE

BY MICHELE STUEVEN

Bea's Bakery, annexed to the honored Mort's Deli in Tarzana Square, has been a Jewish bakery staple in the Valley since 1968, and with the closure of the Beverlywood bakery on the West Side, probably the last of its kind in Los Angeles.

The new owners, seasoned baking legend Lenny Rosenberg and his wife, Adaeze Nwanonyiri, have expanded the huge selection of breads, cookies and cakes to include special recipes and ingredients inspired by Nwanonyiri's Nigerian heritage.

To stay at the forefront of the baking industry, they use ingredients from a variety of cultures like pandan from Southeast Asia, and have partnered with Manila-born commercial baker Grace Baral for a line of ube products that includes bagels, hamantaschen, challah bread, rugelach, ube rice cakes with coconut custard and a

fluffy purple ube custard cake. Nwanonyiri has added her signature red velvet kola nut cupcakes from her homeland to the display cases that boast up to 200 different baked goods daily.

A regular stop for celebrities like Adam Sandler, Smokey Robinson and Pat Benatar, Bea's carries about a dozen different types of hamantaschen, rugelach and breads including onion rye, marble rye, wheat, white, french in small, medium and large, and a whole gluten-free line of breads, Linzer tarts, hamantaschen and cookies.

"There were times when I was working here in the beginning and I would see people of different nationalities peering through the window, afraid to come in," the sanguine Nwanonyiri tells L.A. Weekly during the morning rush. "One day, I was waiting for them to come back and I chased them outside and asked them



Lenny Rosenberg and his wife, Adaeze Nwanonyiri

MICHELE STUEVEN

why they didn't come in. Somewhat intimidated, they said, 'We're not Jewish.' I told them, "no, everybody has a seat at the table here."

The Yin to Nwanonyiri's Yang, Rosenberg has been baking for 40 years and considers himself the Michael Jordan of baking. The Lenny of Lenny's Deli on the West Side, which he bought when it was the famous Junior's Deli on Westwood Boulevard, Rosenberg still uses the same

recipes from the previous Bea's owner who provided baked goods for Juniors.

"Aside from a few religious bakeries, there's really nothing left like this on the West Side since they closed Beverlywood Bakery in Pico-Robertson a couple of years ago," says Rosenberg. "You have to come to the Valley now."

Always looking ahead, the husband and wife team plans to expand and is bringing their multicultural flair to TV, with

It's a Sweet World, a series set to debut in September and produced by Jewish Life Television. It will celebrate desserts from the world's cultural and ethnic traditions through various baking recipes, like making the perfect tres leches for Cinco De Mayo or red velvet kola nut cupcakes for Juneteenth, intertwined with the couple's perspectives on tradition, love and committing to success together.

"The show is a multicultural bak-

ing show where Lenny does the baking and I'm on the design and installation end of things, using different colors and flags from countries around the world," says Nwanonyiri, who infuses her interior design background into the series. "The garments have vibrant colors and textures, and the recipes bond people together through different ingredients, rituals and nationalities. There's room for everybody at our table." 🌍



Bea's Bakery cases

CULTURE

THE 15 BEST HIKES IN LOS ANGELES RIGHT NOW

BY ASHER LUBERTO

Angelenos spend most of their summers at the beach, but there are gorgeous hikes for sunbathing as well. As the weather heats up and the yoga pants come out, these hikes become just as alluring as the beaches and capture much of what the city has to offer. Oceans views? Check. Mountain views? Check. Places to go swimming? Check. Places to go when you need exercise? Check. These hikes are wonderful examples of what Los Angeles can be.

Switzer Falls:

Water, water, water. It's the equivalent of location in real estate when it comes to hiking. Who doesn't want to take a dip after they've just spent an hour walking in the sun? The hikes at Angeles National Forest offer a 50-foot waterfall, along with a cold spring pool for hikers who want to end their trip with a refreshing swim. Of course, that access to water means

crowds, so try to get here early and avoid the traffic.

Solstice Canyon Falls:

Want a less busy water source? Head to Solstice Canyon for a series of modest yet inviting pools that are tucked away from the crowds. Lounging by these pools feels like stepping into a Western, in which cowboys stop by to fill their water jugs in a quiet, untouched ravine. Listen to the birds chirp. The water trickle. And best of all, the lack of tourists asking for pictures.

Runyon Canyon Park:

Yeah, yeah. The hike feels like you're queuing for a ride at Disneyland, there's so many people. But there's something intrinsically Los Angeles about this trail, which is packed with locals showing off their summer bods, runners starting their day, and of course, views of the sprawling city.



Switzer Falls

JEREMY THOMPSON, FLICKR



Bridge to Nowhere

JASON HICKEY, FLICKR

Paseo Miramar:

This is what you think of when you think of ocean views. The hike to get there is no joke, a two mile uphill climb, but the ocean views once you get there are spectacular. A locals-only trail in the evenings, when the waves melt into a sorbet of sunset colors, Paseo Miramar is something to behold.

Bridge to Nowhere:

It feels like you are on a hike to nowhere on the way to this bridge, which is tucked away in a vast desert. In 1938, a flood wiped out the road that connected this bridge on either side, so now it simply floats there with no purpose other than to dazzle. And dazzle it does. There are few sights as peculiar as seeing a random bridge in a baron desert.

Coral Canyon Loop:

Panoramic ocean views, rugged cliffs and a regal nature preserve — what's not to love about Coral Canyon Loop? A 1,000 acre wilderness surrounds the loop, dotted with sycamore trees, wild flowers, willows and alders, along with that turquoise streak of ocean waving in the distance, inviting you to take a dip after your hike.

Mt. Baldy:

Put on those hiking shoes! We're about to scale the highest mountain in Los Angeles. Mt. Baldy towers over Claremont and offers the biggest stair master in town. At 10,069 feet, it's where you go to get a cardio exercise, catch insane views and maybe even grab a beer at the slopeside restaurant Top Notch. After a hike like this, you earned your beer.

Inspiration Point:

A hike called "Inspiration Point" has a lot to live up to. The name promises life-changing results, which it doesn't always deliver. On a foggy day, you can barely even see the trail switch-backing through Echo Canyon mountains. But on a clear day, when the sun is shining, you can see the entire city, the Rose Bowl and the Redondo Beach cove through scopes located at the final overlook. Inspiring? Occasionally so.

Temescal Canyon:

A wooded canyon with spectacular ocean views, colorful shrubbery and active wildlife, there's a reason so many locals flock to this natural oasis. Don't let the moms blabbing away on their phones diminish this trail. While there are plenty



Mt. Baldy from Inspiration Point

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FLICKR



Palos Verdes

JIM HELVEY, CC BY 3.0, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



Vasquez Rocks

JEFF TURNER, CC BY 2.0, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

of loud, obnoxious visitors, there are moments of solitude that make this hike a winning escape.

Vasquez Rocks:

If you're a bandit on the run, you'd want to find a place that is both remote and beautiful, rugged and hospitable. A place where people like Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, or an outlaw like Zorro, could call home. The latter spent his outlaw days in Vazquez rocks, now named after the man who inspired the masked vigilante. The rocks are jagged, protruding slabs that seem intimidating at first glance, but reveal their beauty through further exploration.

Eaton Canyon Trail:

Families enjoy schlepping to Eaton Can-

yon because it's an easy trail, not too difficult for children but still a nice way to get some steps in. Surrounded by lush foliage, lyrical streams and passing by a 40-foot waterfall, the trail is a fun way to spend an afternoon with loved ones. Don't have loved ones? Call a therapist. Just kidding — this hike is a cool stroll for solo hikers as well.

Palos Verdes Bend Reserve:

Enough with the mountains, already. Don't you know these people want to spend their summers at the beach? Bend Reserve is a nice way to hike at the beach — or above the beach — as a number of trails run along the ocean bluffs. Overlooking Catalina Island and turquoise waters, crystal coves and hidden reefs, this is a gorgeous stroll for summer hikers.

Hidden Pond:

Just a short drive from the hustle and bustle of Santa Monica — the pier, promenade and tourists — is a quieter side of the city. The Santa Monica mountains may seem hours away from Santa Monica beach, but they do share the same zip code. On the northwest side of Point Mugu lies a pond filled with water and wildlife in winter, and colorful plants in summer. A hidden gem at any point of year.

Elysian Park:

Those who want to stroll downtown without passing by a Starbucks every block can head to Elysian Park, a popular destination amongst locals. Elysian offers a tranquil escape from the city just a short drive away. Take the beginner-friendly loop past palm trees and eucalyptus trees

while stopping to admire views of the highway, an intersection between modern squalor and natural splendor.

Henninger Flats:

You're in the sky, shaded by trees as a cool breeze wipes the sweat off your back. Henninger Flats is located at one of the highest points in Pasadena, where benches offer shade and panoramic views of the city. The feeling of resting under a pine tree as the city unfolds beneath you is truly wonderful.

Between mountains, beaches and endless green, LA is filled with natural wonders, so if you're looking for a reinvigorating escape from the hustle and bustle of the city, strap on your boots and get to hiking. 

MUSIC

'IN A VIOLENT NATURE' RELIES ON F/X BLOOD PUMPS TO JUICE A NULL SCRIPT

BY MICHAEL ATKINSON

There's an uneasy coldbloodedness at the center of the new Canadian slasher film *In a Violent Nature*, and it has little to do with the plot — of which there isn't a lot. The slasher film, generally speaking, is a subgenre so devoid of textual thinking and human drama that the very idea of crafting a convincing or interesting narrative, beyond the play-by-play of bloody killings, is usually off the table. Historically, whoever handles the practical F/X and the stage-blood pump gets more respect than the screenwriter. First-time director Chris Nash, naturally squirming out of a neat resume of F/X work and gory shorts, is purehearted in this respect: The movie feels like the screenplay was maybe 10 pages long.

The coldblooded conflict in the film has everything to do with form. Nash had an idea: make a bare-bones hunt-them-in-the-woods gorefest but shoot it like Gus Van Sant or the Dardenne brothers. Thus, the movie has a restrained, oblique, trudging style from the very first shot, when an offscreen clique of stoners grabs a locket hanging in a ruined shack and takes off, therein, moments later, initiating the resurrection of a hulking zombie who, we assume, wants the necklace back. Mostly we simply follow this relentless Michael Myers trog as he plows through the woods, starting at his back (we see his fucked-up face only halfway through); it's a stripped-down visual trope that feels arty and meaningful even when there's nothing else going on. The cinematography of Pierce Derks carries the show for a while, capturing the dark and often beautiful Canadian forests at dusk and dawn, suggesting without a word spoken that this homicidal figure has a sense of primeval resonance to him.

The suggestion is only that. Sorry to spoil, but though the film toggles back to Nash's and Derks's stylistic ideas every now and then, it also needs to fulfill its subgenre obligations, which means that

our undead hero, about whom we eventually hear a campfire-boogeyman backstory, finds the offending though oblivious post-teens and rips them apart in variously ridiculous ways, one by one. To say there's a mismatch between the message behind the filmmakers' borrowed arthouse syntax and the thrust of up-your-nose flesh shredding and plasma spraying is to easily exhaust this film's tiny tank of gas. You could even call it hypocritical. Slasher movies' use of suffering to muster shocked chuckles has never thrilled me, even as a kid, and here, as elsewhere, we occupy a dumb world where heads pop and spew as though they were water balloons filled with cherry Kool-Aid.

Simply killing someone to death isn't zoomy enough, they have to be treated like a Gumby in the hands of a sadistic toddler. One murder entails pulling a girl's head through a ripped hole in her own midsection, and if that sounds interesting to you, get a therapist. Nash's film might be, on the most superficial level, one of the most formally interesting slasher films I've ever seen, in that it has a single visual idea to it, but that's like saying it's better than getting an actual tooth pulled.

Then there's the head-scratching syntax of the title — which nature? in a violent what? — which itself suggests that maybe Nash wasn't the keenest product of the exalted Canadian school system (unless it's a lifted quote from John Donne or someone, which, under the circumstances would be a hilariously pretentious move). All that said, the film's final chunk, which involves a long car ride with the traumatized Final Girl (Andrea Pavlovic, interchangeable with the other half-dozen brats) and a chatty older woman driver with her own stories to tell (Friday the 13th Part 2's Lauren May Taylor, cast as a genre icon, I guess), turns a different, more subtle corner, hinting at the movie Nash could've made. If he hadn't been so in love with cartoon dismemberment. **LA**



Switzer Falls

JEREMY THOMPSON, FLICKR

LA WEEKLY CLASSIFIEDS

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Thank you Saint Jude, Saint of the Impossible, EC

