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WHY
LOVECHILD THREW A MASSIVE
AND INVITED **BLOCK PARTY**
EVERYBODY

BY MARK STEFANOS

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ENTERTAINMENT

REVIEW: 'THE ROSES' BLOOMS FRAGRANTLY BUT WITHERS IN THE END

BY ASHER LUBERTO

Roses are red, violets are blue, but what happens when the roses turn blue, as these *Roses* are known to do? In this comedic pairing of *Marriage Story* and *Meet the Parents*, a seemingly joyous marriage is joyously beaten to death like a piñata, as these characters' darkest secrets become comedic candy for audiences to chew over with giddy smiles. The same way Michael Douglas and Kathleen Turner's marriage became a wrecking derby of barbs in *The War of the Roses*, so does Benedict Cumberbatch and Olivia Coleman's marriage become a wonky car crash in *The Roses*. In this wonderful marital comedy, it's the fights that are most fun.

More a reimagining of Warren Adler's novel than Danny DeVito's sourly amusing film, *The Roses* pins two of England's greatest actors against each other in a fight to the death (or just a fight to see who gets to keep their mansion). They're certainly pushing the envelope on "til death do us part," as literal murder attempts unravel and inevitably come crashing down in a bombastically overcrowded yet bemusingly entertaining final act.

From the start, when Theo (Cumberbatch) and Ivy Rose (Coleman) are in a therapy session where they're forced to say kind things about each other—which of course devolves into a series of back-handed compliments—you can tell these characters weren't meant for each other. Even the therapist throws her hands in the air, exclaiming there's no way the couple can save their relationship. Flashback 10 years and things seem great: Theo and Ivy meet cute in a restaurant, share a few laughs over a candlelight dinner, then share an impromptu moment in the kitchen fridge where sparks fly and frozen food flies off the shelf.

But thrust back to the present day, and they're strangers in their own sterile home. Theo's spectacular new museum is about to open, and to encourage Ivy to pursue her culinary talents, he buys her a cozy restaurant aptly named "We've Got Crabs." He's the breadwinner, she's the bread maker, but the roles perilously flip when a storm obliterates Theo's museum and a food critic is stranded in their idyllic town, forced to eat at Ivy's restaurant.



Olivia Colman and Benedict Cumberbatch in "The Roses"

PHOTO BY JAAP BUITENDIJK, COURTESY OF SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES

A rave review sets Ivy on a path to foodie stardom, while a viral video of Theo reacting to the demise of his architectural gem sends him on a path to unemployment. A star is born, a marriage is upended, and Theo's ego is trampled, engulfed and demolished, leaving him in the role of house husband while Ivy jets off for lavish foodie events across the equator. For better and for worse, competition, aggressive zingers, and occasionally zesty, occasionally dreary gags are seasoned into this movie's melting pot of misfortune.

Fittingly, Jay Roach has proven to be one of cinema's greatest directors of household disasters (see: *Meet the Parents*), and he's one of the great conductors of dinner table mishaps, finding unique ways of turning banal conversations into a simmering feast of snowballing disasters, which he does magnificently here when Theo and Ivy join their friends for dinner. Andy Samberg is a master at playing comedically bland losers, while Kate McKinnon continues to bring weird Barbie energy to the table, their mismatched personas are a fun contrast to the mismatched energy of Theo and Ivy, which makes for

some hilarious dinner conversations throughout.

The script by Tony McNamara is deliciously crude, leaning more toward crassness than witticism. Some audiences might be aghast by Coleman spewing out obscenities, but those who have seen her artsier roles know she can deliver such crudities with meme-able aplomb.

The ending is unintentionally sloppy, however, devolving into a cinematic mess of tonal imbalances that undermines everything in the movie. We're supposed to believe in Ivy and Theo's initial spark, but their fighting escalates to achingly depressing, in a fatal sense. You start to wonder if these movie characters ever actually cared for each other, or why we're supposed to root for them in the first place? Why remake a movie about the perils of chasing materialistic love when you aren't going to explore that topic in the slightest, or find any other reason for their anguish other than to create some cringeworthy laughs?

I found myself searching for a meaning to *The Roses* that wasn't there. Perhaps poetically, this *Rose* blooms fragrantly but withers pathetically in the dark. [A]

FOOD

WHAT'S POPPING UP

BY MICHELE STUEVEN

Food Festival Season



COURTESY OFF THE HOOK



COURTESY OFF THE HOOK

BeachLife Festival, the largest beach party and premier music experience in Southern California, is joining forces with the 2nd Annual Manhattan Beach Food & Wine on Friday, Sept. 12 and Saturday, Sept. 13 for a world-class culinary festival.

For the first time, BeachLife will bring its signature energy, turntables, and coastal vibes into the heart of Manhattan Beach Food & Wine with the debut of the dedicated BeachLife DJ Music Stage, a full-sensory takeover where 46 All-Star Chefs will be preparing world-class cuisine along with premier wines, spirits, handcrafted cocktails, and craft beer.

The chef lineup includes Susan Feniger and Mary Sue Milliken, Cathy and Vanda Asapahu, Neal Fraser, Ray Garcia, Raphael Lunetta, Michael Reed, David Lefevre, and Chris Cosentino. Tickets for the 21+ event are now on sale at manhattanbeachfoodandwine.com.

The 7th annual **OFF THE HOOK Santa Monica Seafood Festival** returns to the Santa Monica Pier on Sunday, Oct. 19, for National Seafood Month and the city's 150th Anniversary. The seafood-inspired tasting event features the city's top chefs and restaurants showcasing their favorite underwater ingredients and all-you-can-eat and drink tastings. There will be live music, oyster shucking competitions,

games, and it is 100% free of single-use plastics, raising funds and awareness for **Heal the Bay**.

Westside favorite participants include Santa Monica Seafood, Fitoor Santa Monica, Blue Plate Oysterette, Michael's Santa Monica, Sushi Roku, The Lobster, The Albright, Santa Monica Whaler, Al Dente Pasta Shop, Soko Sushi, The Surfing Fox, Cityclub LA, Emporium Thai, Sweetfin Poké, Feisty Fish Poke, and The Butter End.

The Guest List returns to Marelle with a culinary collaboration between Chef Raphael Lunetta and special guest Chef Neal Fraser of Redbird|Vibiana. The one-night-only experience brings two Los Angeles chefs together for a five-course tasting menu that celebrates bold California flavors, creative technique, and coastal spirit. Hosted inside Marelle at the Sandbourne Hotel, the price is \$160 per person and includes a first course of Maine Lobster and rock shrimp with bricoche, sweet onion, celery, cornichon, and an Ossetra caviar potato chip, followed by a late harvest stone fruit salad with green olives and feta in a toasted black pepper Banyuls wine vinaigrette. The lineup goes on with honey squash agnolotti truffle fondue, sauteed John Dory with chateaufort mushrooms, glazed filet of beef, and cured ham brochette with a summer corn



COURTESY MANHATTAN BEACH FOOD & WINE

pudding and honey cookie crumble for dessert.

Get tickets for the dinner on Thursday, Sept. 25 on [OpenTable](https://www.opentable.com).

From the creators of the sold-out hit *Crimson and Clover*, Tableau Productions has opened *Down the Rabbit Hole*, a provocative, immersive burlesque experience at the historic Cinegrill Theater, hidden behind a bookcase in the lower lobby of *The Hollywood Roosevelt*.

Inspired by *Alice in Wonderland* and

reimagined through a lens of cinematic glamour and surreal excess, the show invites guests into a dreamlike underworld of hypnotic burlesque, avant-garde fashion, and hallucinatory visuals. Directed by Tracy Phillips and led by a majority-female cast, *Down the Rabbit Hole* is described as equal parts spectacle and seduction, a fever dream that unravels across secret vignettes and shadowy corners of the hotel. Check availability on [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com). [E]

WHY LOVECHILD THREW A MASSIVE BLOCK PARTY AND INVITED EVERYBODY

BY MARK STEFANOS

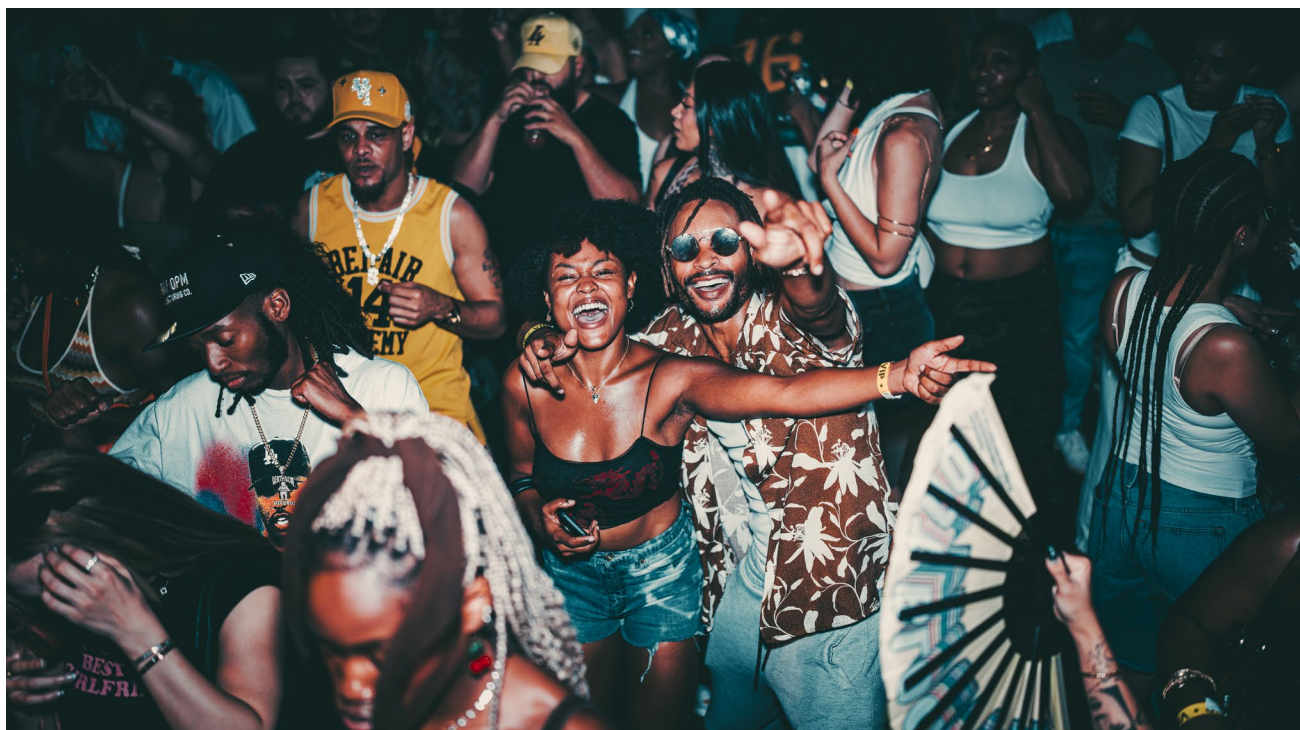
Roaring into the Arts District last Sunday on a toasty Labor Day Weekend, ten prominent LA party collectives came together for this year's [Block Party Presented by LoveChild](#). Between an indoor and outdoor stage, it was a full day and night of music and dancing, capping off the summer with a showcase of the best of LA's vibrant urban culture. LoveChild gave us a lesson on what putting the city on your back truly looks and sounds like.

Taking place at the complex known as [9ThirtyLA](#), staggered sets ranging from one to two hours had each stage pumping their own flavor of music and vibe from the different collectives.

At the outdoor stage, [VIM!](#) showcased their African influences with a bounce-fest; [Junkyard Jouvét](#) brought the celebratory Caribbean Jouvét all night dance party to the afternoon sun, an [LA Weekly favorite](#) highlighted in 2023; [Pangea Sound](#), an appointment party for years, brought their global sound from continents on both sides of the Atlantic, also [one of our 2024 picks](#); [Hardly Home](#), justly represented West Indian, Mexican, Congolese and Palestinian heritage, another that we highlighted last year; and the Afro Latina led [¡Baile! World](#) kept us dancing outside til the lights turned off.

At the indoor stage, [&things](#) represented the best of black culture; the eclectic [Nsidevoices](#) brought their premium selects; the female-led [JSTAPARTY](#) kept things fabulous; the team of Filipinos behind [Slow Jamz](#) mixed R&B currents and classics in an endless singalong; and [Interlude](#), the mainstay of Thursday nights, closed the indoors with nonstop bangers.

Additional sets came from [Raw Hunny](#), [ISSAMAU](#), [LEXAPEEL](#), [Angela Austria](#) and [Olea](#) of Soulection, and special guests included [Kal Banx](#), [City James](#), [Mark Lux](#), [Sham 1016](#), and rapper [Buddy](#). The event was complemented by 25 original eye-popping videos by [BASEWOOD](#), spearheaded by director [City James](#), showcasing the collaboration of culture. Drinks flowed and stands dotted the block with foods and goods from around the globe.



PHOTOS: @K_THE_LENS_

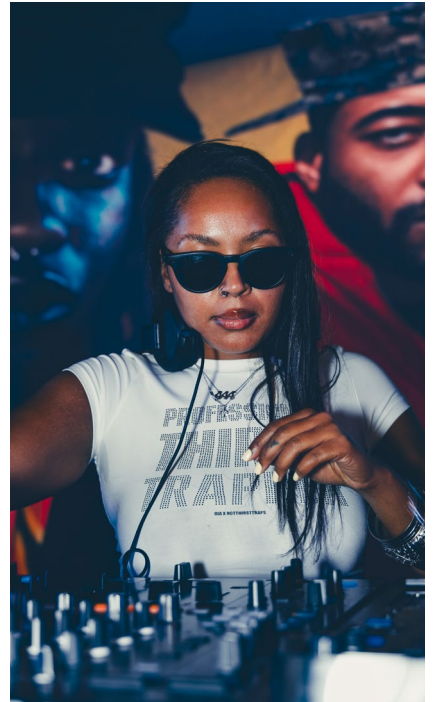






PHOTO: @K_THE_LENS_

Getting ten party collectives for one big bash, in short, is crazy. “We are preparing to build a tiny city in one day,” LoveChild CEO and Founder [Ryan Sauter](#) adds, “You start with a timeline, then a budget, and then you are inundated with unsexy but essential tasks like permitting and safety, procuring vendors, and programming.”

“It was definitely a major undertaking,” says [Waseel Amoura](#), VP of Marketing for LoveChild and the Founder of [Hardly Home](#), which also drove the lineup curation and marketing. “There were a lot of moving parts, getting all the collectives on board, planning all the logistics, and making everything come together in under a month’s time. It was hectic but very fulfilling.”

They both credited the LoveChild team for being a well-oiled machine, shouting out their Director of Operations Shay Lewis.

It wasn’t their first rodeo — last year’s Block Party brought out 4,200 people and featured performances by 4Batz, SMINO, P-Lo, Buddy, Westside Boogie and Chuck English. This year topped it, bringing more people in from the various corners of the city with a turnout cracking the 5,000 mark. It required an extensive permitting process to be in full alignment with the City of LA.

LA has a long lore of squabbles between party collectives, but there were no egos detected at the event. We asked if there was friction in the lead-up but were told, surprisingly, there really wasn’t any.

“I think that’s something that people underestimate about LA,” says Waseel. “I think people are yearning for more unity in times like these. It felt like a no-brainer when we spoke on the vision of highlighting the culture of LA, and every collective felt the same.”

“The North Star of the event was to celebrate LA and its mosaic of neighborhoods,” adds Ryan, “There was no friction; there was mutual respect amongst these artists, so collaboration came easily.”

This spirit of unity seemed to be the pervasive feeling of the whole event. And it’s a sentiment that has floated through the air since January, when the city came together in response to the devastating wildfires.

During that traumatic period, LA collectives [IHeartComix](#), [Brownies & Lemonade](#) and others embarked on a similar undertaking, bringing 11 parties together for the [LA Gives Back](#) fire benefit show. Bouncing between some of our favorite parties at the Bellwether that night was a real treat, feeling almost like

a festival of LA’s DIY scene — of course, with the backdrop of supporting those impacted by the tragedy.

Last weekend’s Block Party felt a lot like that. And while we’re removed from the need for fire relief, the LoveChild team answered that call when the city was in flames at the start of this year, putting together their own comprehensive fire relief efforts.

They immediately sprang into action, turning 9ThirtyLA into a donation drop-off center and shelter, becoming a main distribution hub for other shelters, and dispersing thousands of donations. They also threw a benefit concert featuring [SABA](#), [Samara Cyn](#), [Buddy](#) and [Ben Reilly](#), along with DJ sets from their residents [Kazadi](#), [Waseel](#), [Dirty Dell](#) and [VivaLatina](#), and friends [Thrice Groove](#) and [Zyah Belle](#).

That instinct to unite and give back makes Ryan, who hails from Riverside, and Waseel, who came down from the Bay some years ago, champions of their chosen home.

“It’s meaningful to me because LoveChild was created to bring people together — so launching it with a block party is my love letter to Los Angeles,” says Ryan, noting that the event should

PHOTO: JONATHAN JERICO @JONATHAN.JERICO
Ryan Sauter, LoveChild CEO and FounderPHOTO: @K_THE_LENS_
Waseel Amoura, VP of Marketing for LoveChild and the Founder of Hardly Home

set the tone for future LoveChild experiences, aiming “to celebrate the multicultural mash-up that powers LA.”

“The Block Party is a full-circle representation of everything beautiful about Los Angeles — the culture, the music, the people, the food, and the energy that makes this city special,” says Waseel. “The event was designed to feel like LA at its best: vibrant, diverse, and unapologetically creative.”