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Nocturnal Wonderland

CELEBRATES 30 YEARS OF PLUR

BY MARK STEFANOS

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CULTURE

LA WORLD PREMIERE OF THE CORTÈGE: A FESTIVE FUNERAL FOR OUR TIMES

BY MICHELE STUEVEN



COURTESY THE CORTÈGE

Starting on Thursday, Sept. 11, through Sunday, Sept. 28, creative studio Visomnina, helmed by participatory artist Jeff Hull (The JeJune Institute, The Latitude Society), will present the world premiere of *The Cortège*: a first-of-its-kind production living in the space between performance, ritual, and festival.

In development since January 2023, *The Cortège* will premiere at the [Los Angeles Equestrian Center](#) in Burbank on the Cricket Field for a limited engagement. Unfolding at dusk, the three-hour experience is anchored by a 60-minute procession that revives the lost arts of mythic pageantry.

The evening begins with an open-air food market and live musical prelude. As twilight descends, audiences embark on a sonic voyage through choreographed movement, archetypal costuming, drone apparitions, puppetry, robotics, and participation. At the evening's close, attendees are invited to join the procession and gather for shared tea and ambient sounds in the Afterlife Tent.



During the performance, a wordless, cinematic score is transmitted via wireless headsets, with original music by El Búho, Boreta, and TOKIMONSTA, alongside tracks from Air, Andrew Bird, Beautiful Chorus, Freedom Fighters, and others.

Inspired in part by Carl Jung's theory of the collective unconscious, *The Cortège* is described as speaking through archetypal symbols, sound, and movement rather than narrative dialogue. By embodying archetypes instead of characters,

and ceremony instead of spectacle, *The Cortège* offers participants a space to witness, feel, and begin to process what cannot always be named.

Choreographed by Japanese battle dancer MiYU, the production features a cast of eight dancers and six ensemble members, with street-style dancer Capjay in the lead role of Everyman.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the procession begins at 8 p.m. on Thursdays through Sundays. Find tickets, more info, and early access at thecortège.com.

FOOD

WHAT'S POPPING UP

BY MICHELE STUEVEN

New Food Offerings

At SoFi Stadium To Kick Off 2025 NFL Season



COURTESY JAKOB LAYMAN

To kick off the start of the 2025 NFL season, SoFi Stadium and its concessionaire, Legends, unveiled new food and beverage offerings now available at the stadium.

The new menu offers a taste of California, with classic favorites like the LA Street Dog, beef sliders, and al pastor torta. The stadium now also offers a wide range of Southern California cuisines, including pork char siu with steamed rice and vegetables, tempura stuffed peppers

filled with spicy shrimp and crab, beef flautas, and a variety of loaded fries from beef shawarma and teriyaki to classic pastрами. Each month, certain concession stands will also feature a rotating pizza and burger of the month special.

The Google Cloud Club and Suites premium concourse has expanded its culinary offerings with two new concession stands and a grab-and-go market. A Mexican-inspired concession stand featuring favorites like carne and pollo asado, and al pastor pork, all available with

rice and beans in a bowl. There are also sides like esquites verdes and tres leches cake for dessert.

Another new concept is a Treats Stand, which offers soft-serve ice cream, funnel cakes, and a warm cookie bake. The new grab-and-go market in the southeast corner will offer a variety of hot and cold food items, from hot dogs and nachos to sushi and salads, along with a selection of beverages, beer, and water. Additionally, more cocktail bars in the northwest and southeast corners have been added to

serve freshly-made cocktails.

Self-ordering kiosks are now available at various concession stands throughout the stadium, and fans can also use the Uber Eats app to order food and drinks directly to their seats or for pickup in dedicated concession lanes. To help navigate all the food and beverage options, use the new digital dining guide by scanning QR codes located throughout the stadium's digital signage.

SoFi Stadium kicked off its 2025 NFL regular season on September 7, and



COURTESY CULVER HOTEL

the Los Angeles Chargers will face the Denver Broncos in their home opener on Sunday, September 21, at 1:05 p.m. (PT). Information about games at SoFi Stadium, including tickets, can be found at sofistadium.com.

The second annual **Mezcal Por Siempre** festival returns Saturday, Sept. 13, bringing together more than 30 traditional mezcal producers at Rolling Greens Arts District from 2-11 p.m. (VIP early entry 1 p.m.).

Founded by Ivan Vasquez of Madre Restaurant and Rocío Flores, this year's festival has evolved far beyond tastings to become a celebration of Mexican culture as resistance, featuring live performances, activism partnerships, and Michelin Guide-recognized cuisine.

This year's debut: **Graciela Ángeles Carreño of legendary Real Minero** will launch her book *Mexcalli* in the United States for the first time, a significant cultural moment as she represents one of mezcal's most respected matriarchal voices.

There will be more than 30 traditional producers, including many who have never poured outside Mexico as well as legendary maestros like Miguel Ángel Partida (Chacolo), Eduardo Ángeles



New SoFi Stadium eats

COURTESY JAKOB LAYMAN

(Lalocura), and Rey Gaspar Cruz García (Mezcal Cruz de Olvido).

The festival will also spotlight pioneering women in mezcal, including co-founder Rocío Flores (16 years in agave spirits, recently launched Sonajero Ponche liqueur) and Graciela Ángeles Carreño (Real Minero matriarch debuting her book).

Michelin-Spotlighted Cuisine from KOMAL (Chef Fátima Juárez), Burritos La Palma, and Ditroit Taquería will be served, and cultural programming will include Ballet Folklórico Nueva Antequera, live podcasts, and visual arts.

Activism Partnerships with CIELO and NDLON will anchor the festival's community mission, and an exclusive VIP after party takes place at Bar Flores with intimate maestro access. Tickets available on Eventbrite.

This summer, the world's most lovable plush brand is teaming up with one of LA's most creative boba destinations for an immersive, tiki-themed takeover. Jazwares and Bearology are bringing the Squishmallows Surf Club Pop-Up to Bearology Temple City, starting Saturday, Sept. 13, for a limited three-month engagement.

Designed as a fully interactive and hopelessly cute immersive experience where fans of all ages can sip exclusive Squishmallows-inspired drinks, collect limited-edition merch, and step inside a plush-filled universe made for cuddling and content creation with a tropical twist.

Signature sips and bites include *Cam's Caramel Cloud* (caramel milk tea with sea salt foam & mochi cubes), *Junie's Tropical Hugs* (coconut milk, pineapple & mango purée), *Maritza's Tiki Cooler* (orange and pineapple with a citrus kick), and pork katsu sliders and "Mallow Melt" grilled cheese.

Reservations recommended via

OpenTable (\$10/person, applied to bill). Walk-ins are welcome as space allows. Booking can be done on OpenTable.

This September, **The Culver Hotel** celebrates its 101st anniversary with a specially curated menu for two, priced at \$101, available throughout the month.

The celebratory offering features classics designed for sharing like the popular prawn cocktail with cocktail sauce and lemon, a Caesar salad of baby gem lettuce, rosemary sourdough croutons and white anchovy, beef sliders with Fiscalini cheddar, butter lettuce and bread & butter pickles served with fries, and a decadent Coffee Crème Brûlée, made with coffee from the Mallick family farm, Hawaii Sunshine Orchards, for dessert.

Available from 5 p.m. until close, the meal for two will be available in The Grand Lobby dining room and bar or al fresco on the tree-lined patio. Nightly live music starts at 7 p.m.

To further commemorate the hotel's birthday, guests will also receive a Culver Hotel trivia quiz; anyone who answers all questions correctly will be entered into a draw at the end of the month for a complimentary night's stay. Walk-ins are accepted, and reservations can be made on OpenTable. 🍷

ART

LA ARTIST MISTER CARTOON ON BRINGING WEST COAST CULTURE TO WSS WITH NEW PRO CLUB COLLECTION

BY MARK STEFANOS

LA street culture pulses through a new limited-edition capsule collection by legendary Chicano artist **Mister Cartoon for Pro Club at WSS**. The line dropped Sept. 5, at a public launch at Rolling Greens in DTLA, and the full collab is available at WSS stores and online now.

The legendary tattoo and graffiti artist took on the role of creative director, designing a lineup of tees, hoodies, jackets and accessories inspired by lowrider culture, Chicano iconography, and LA's street art legacy. It's a fitting partnership with Pro Club, the heavyweight streetwear staple found in swap meets and t-shirt stores, and every ball court in the city, and WSS which is just as ubiquitous in LA.

We spoke with Mister Cartoon about how this collection came about, what defines West Coast culture, and how that imagery lights up this collection:

LA WEEKLY: What inspired the partnership between you, WSS, and Pro Club for this limited-edition apparel collection, and how did the collaboration come about?

MISTER CARTOON: All three brands started out in the swap meets of Southern California, and none of us stopped producing over the years and going towards the light. I dropped my limited edition Nike's at WSS in 2005, and Pro Club was killing it with blank tees on the street at the time, now we have linked up over a decade later to collaborate on this collection.



What was the design process?

The design process behind this collection was to bring the classic bold graphics from the nineties and give them a modern twist for this new generation. Since every decade you have to reintroduce yourself to a batch of youngsters.

How did Pro Club's aesthetic influence your designs for this collection?

Pro Club has always had solid quality blanks so it was like a big canvas waiting to be painted.

What do you think defines "West Coast heritage"?

West Coast street wear is a reflection of tattooing, lowriding and funk soul music.



We use solid industrial colors that you will find in a swap meet, or at an army surplus store — navy's khaki's, black and grey, that is the Pantone chart of this collection.

What elements of West Coast heritage did you want to capture in this collection?

One of the standout pieces to me is an Impala hopping on a street corner, serving the competition, liquor stores in the background and the ghetto bird in the sky. Old English fonts and fine line classic cursive throughout the collection tie it all together.

How do you hope this collection



impacts how people view Chicano and street culture?

This collection is for the youth, they will feel it in their heart, we don't have to sell it to them. We hope when they look at it they are looking into a mirror and they notice the detail and their culture represented.

What else do you got coming up?

I have a lot of projects in the oven which include hand painted fine art, a sneaker drop, a remote control ice cream truck, LA Rams clothing drop, and if you catch me on the right day you can end up getting sleeved down. And if you want your car to shine check out my [Art of Car care line at O'Reillys](#). 📍



COURTESY OF MISTER CARTOON, PRO CLUB AND WSS

MUSIC

NOCTURNAL WONDERLAND CELEBRATES 30 YEARS OF PLUR — WITH DONALD GLAUDE AND GALANTIS

BY MARK STEFANOS

Before Coachella, before Tomorrowland, before Ultra, before EDC left Los Angeles, and before EDC even existed, ravers entered Nocturnal Wonderland through the looking-glass. The OG SoCal rave turns 30 this weekend, Sept. 13 and 14, making it the longest-running electronic musical festival in North America. Its regular attendees will tell you they keep coming back for a big reason: it's a sanctuary for Peace, Love, Unity and Respect, the foundational doctrine of electronic music culture.

Nocturnal Wonderland started in the LA underground scene as a one-night event held in a downtown warehouse in February 1995, hosted by the now-ubiquitous music events outfit Insomniac, just two years after its founder Pasquale Rotella started the company. "Wonderland" draws from *Alice in Wonderland*, with the first events pulling inspiration and imagery from the Lewis Carroll classic.

The 1995 edition leaned heavily into the *Alice*-ness of it all, with the front of the flyer superimposing the party name over the illustration "A Mad Tea-Party" by Greg Hildebrandt, and the back noting "Your Host for the night: Chesire Cat," the "Queen & King of Hearts Thrown," a "Tweedledee & Tweedledum's Playhouse," with info hotlines called "Tea Party Lines." It ends with Rotella's trademark invitation: "Come in Peace or Don't come at all," ensuring PLUR was baked in from the jump. Production was modest but colorful, holding to the DIY aesthetic of the rave scene of the time.

The event moved to The Shrine in '96, inviting ravers to a "Strange and Wondrous land..." reminding them to bring their "drums, whistles, candy, stuffed animals, smiles, glowsticks & nice things to share."

In 1997, the fest encountered challenges when they switched venues at the last minute to Native American tribal land,



Donald Glaude on stage at Nocturnal Wonderland in 2023.

COURTESY OF INSOMNIAC



2013



2014

PHOTO BY ALEX PEREZ



2015



2015

PHOTO BY DOUG VAN SANT



2015

PHOTO BY JAKE WEST

where some tribe members didn't get paid. What ensued is the stuff of rave lore, with EDM Identity reporting that "local tribe members set up a barbed-wire fence and guarded the gate entrance with guns in an effort to keep the 20,000 expected attendees out. Their efforts ultimately failed with ravers forcing the front gate open with a car, which then gave everyone a path to rush the fenced gate."

Things went smoother in subsequent years. In 1998, the event moved to NOS Events Center in San Bernardino, which became a more stable, recurring venue, gradually attracting a larger fanbase, bigger DJs, and improvements in sound and lighting.

The festival became a two-day affair in 2011, and made a permanent landing at Glen Helen Regional Park in San Bernardino in 2013 — a wide, beautiful park that feels like a campground. Fittingly, Wonderland is now primarily a camping festival, similar to Lightning in a Bottle or Burning Man, which lends itself to a communal atmosphere that multiplies camaraderie and smiles.

Glen Helen is one of the favorite venues of dedicated SoCal ravers, with the only drawback festival goers note being the traffic — so plan to add an hour or two to the commute if you're coming and going in peak hours, or go and leave early to avoid a jam.

The theme has also evolved from *Alice in Wonderland* (which has now become the theme of sister festival Beyond Wonderland) into one that celebrates neon nocturnal creatures, think frogs and gnomes and mushrooms.



2015

PHOTO BY MARC VAN DER AA



2016



2017

PHOTO BY JAKE WEST



2017

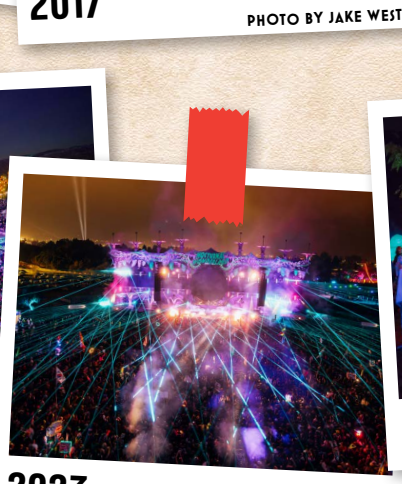


2018



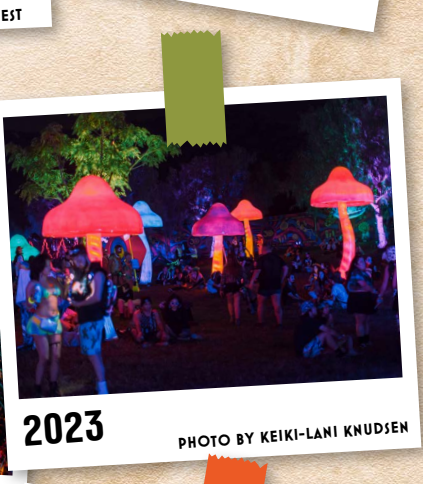
2023

PHOTO BY IVAN MENESES



2023

PHOTO BY JAMAL EID



2023

PHOTO BY KEIKI-LANI KNUDSEN



2023

PHOTO BY KEIKI-LANI KNUDSEN



2023

PHOTO BY KEIKI-LANI KNUDSEN



1990

PHOTO BY MICHAEL TULLBERG



1990

PHOTO BY MICHAEL TULLBERG

COURTESY OF INSOMNIAC

While the fest caters to ravers with wide and refined palates in search of more intimate performances, it's had no shortage of mega stars throughout the years, including Armin van Buuren (who performed in 2015), Avicii (2011), The Chemical Brothers (2007), David Guetta (2015), Dillon Francis (2022, 2017), Illenium (2016, 2018, 2018, 2022), Kaskade (2004, 2006, 2008, 2011, 2015), Martin Garrix (2014), ODESZA (2016), Paul van Dyk (2003, 2007), SLANDER (2014, 2015, 2018), Subtronics (2019, 2023) and Tiësto (2001).

"I always love playing in LA; it's my second home, and there's nowhere else quite like Nocturnal Wonderland," Galantis, who played in 2015 and is returning this year, tells *LA Weekly*. "It's got its own very unique vibe! The atmosphere is so special — people are really coming together at this festival, and Pasquale [Rotella] sure knows how to throw a serious party!!"

For his set this year, the celebrated Swedish producer and DJ says festivalgoers can expect "high-boost energy, pure, raw, uncut happiness mixed with classic, zesty house flavors, and some brand-new, unreleased Galantis sprinkled on top," he said, asking, "You ready?"

House music legend Donald Glaude holds the record of most appearances at Nocturnal Wonderland, performing in 2001, '04, '05, '09, '10, '14, '15, '23, and returning this year.

He's racked up many fond memories across his eight appearances so far, but his current favorites are from his most recent — "It was beyond amazing. Just the way the crowd showed up from nowhere, and my partner got to experience all the thrills and chills with me. She got to see me play this proper event that means so much to me," says Glaude. He promises that for his 2025 set, he won't be taking the opportunity for granted.

Insomniac won't be either. For their milestone this weekend, Nocturnal Wonderland's mantra will be "30 Years of Dancing in the Dark" which will be highlighted with lit up installations, art and creatures, and over 70 acts from a wide range of genres, including: ARMNHMR, Axwell, Benny Benassi, Eric Prydz, Harvard Bass, Infected Mushroom, Oliver Heldens, Seven Lions, Waxtroda (Matroda B2B Wax Motif), Zedd, Jessica Audiffred B2B Riot Ten, Wooli, AC Slater B2B Tchami, Skream, TheConnect B2B Skonka, Trice and CoolHandLuke.

There will be five stages, and new stage names this year: "Mystic Wild," previously "Wolves Den;" "Dawn Mountain" (hosted by Bassrush), previously "Labyrinth" (hosted by Bassrush); "Aurora Plains" (hosted by Insomniac Records), previously "Sunken Garden" (hosted by Insomniac Records); "Rave Cave" and "Beatbox Art Car."

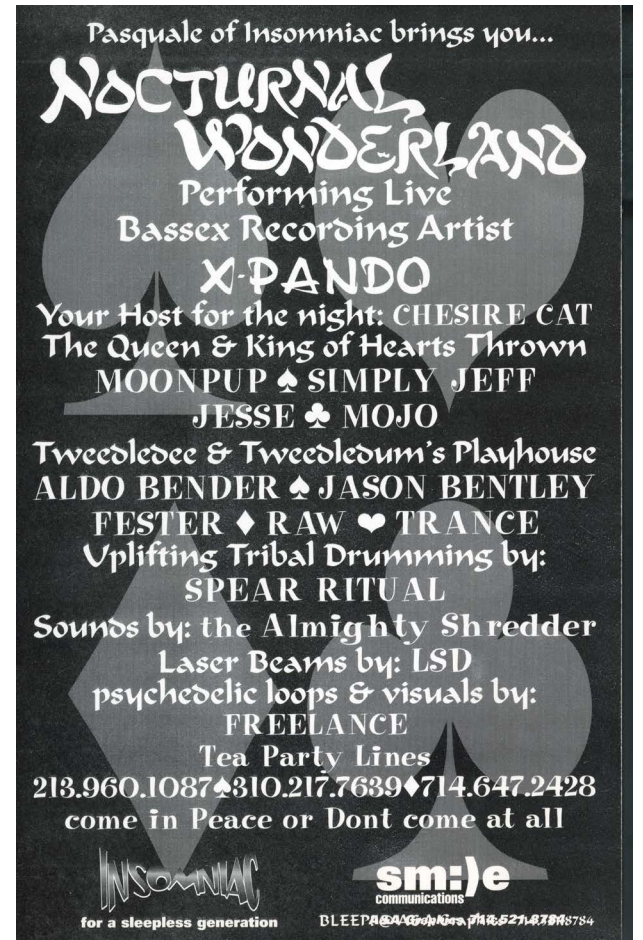
"I love everything about playing Nocturnal ... I love EVERYTHING about it," says Glaude.

For many of the 80,000 ravers who will be dancing between the two days this weekend — a large chunk of whom are repeat attendees — it's a sentiment they wholeheartedly share. [A]



Nocturnal Wonderland 1995 Flyer - FRONT

COURTESY OF INSOMNIAC



Nocturnal Wonderland 1995 Flyer - REAR

COURTESY OF INSOMNIAC



Galantis

COURTESY OF EDC ORLANDO