

LAW & TIME

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the fashion
anarchy of

I Love Boosters' Shirley Kurata

starts
with

By Michele Stueven

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LA WEEKLY

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MUSIC

GUY GERBER'S RUMORS CELEBRATES 10 YEARS IN CHINATOWN WITH ONE FINAL LEAP INTO THE UNKNOWN

BY MARK STEFANOS

From his lush home in Ibiza, Guy Gerber paces as he speaks. The DJ, producer, instrumentalist, and now visual artist asks if the camera movement from his walking is distracting. It's not, it's pretty fitting actually — Gerber has built a career on journeying, meandering sets that search and build while they suck you in.

Later in the interview, Guy Gerber disappears mid-sentence to hand beers to a friend arriving at his home. He's smiling and pacing through his house while talking about the anxiety that still overtakes him before nearly every set he plays. Even after decades in electronic music, Gerber says he walks into performances unsure whether he'll find the right emotional thread.

"In general, I totally improvise," he tells LA Weekly. "And every single time, I regret it at the beginning. Every single time. I'm never saying, 'Oh, wow, that's what a great idea to improvise.' And then I'm terrified."

"My friend said I have imposter syndrome — like I'm really thinking, 'What am I doing? Who am I?' — And then at one point, I emerge. I think what people hear is the journey, kind of like I'm almost falling, and then I come back."

It's this edge that has turned Rumors, the party series he launched in Ibiza in 2013 before bringing it to LA's Chinatown a decade ago, into a sensation. What began as an underground beach kickback in Europe evolved into a legacy electronic music event across the globe and here in this city, and in the process, established Chinatown's Gin Ling Way as the quintessentially-LA outdoor block party venue that we know and love.

This Saturday, May 16, he brings Rumors back to Gin Ling Way, marking the 10th anniversary and the final time the party will be held in LA at this location. Joining him are longtime collaborator DJ Harvey and Midnite Mary.

"I like to do special things. If it becomes for everyone, I have to find something different," Gerber says about the decision



Guy Gerber

COURTESY OF GUY GERBER

to bookend the Chinatown Rumors run, an appropriate finale for an artist who has spent much of his career balking at formulas and predictability.

Gerber talks about DJing less like a technical skill and more like a psychological state. Usually he arrives with a loose playlist and lets instinct take over. He often opens performances with restrained, melancholy selections rather than obvious crowd-pleasers. “In my DJ sets, I cannot start strong. It’s just not me as a person. I just like to put a first track to change the narrative and start a new story. And then I just follow it.”

He has come to embrace the tension. “A sad song is usually not a strong song,” he says. “And usually, I feel a slight amount of doubt in the crowd, and this is usually when I thrive.”

Throwing the trend of tightly programmed festival sets and instant gratification to the wind, Gerber prefers gradual emotional movement. The crowd has to be patient, and Gerber has to believe in himself. “I know that if I stay consistent, this moment will arrive. It will get born.”

The payoff for him, he says, comes from discovery. “When I find it, I don’t want to stop,” he says. For his audience, it’s a thrilling experience to be along for the ride as the seasoned craftsman hits his stride in real time, often translating into rollicking marathon sets.

Gerber launched Rumors in Ibiza in 2013 during a period when much of dance music was leaning toward harder, maximal sounds. “It was kind of a pioneering party,” he says. “Everybody back then was very ravey and strong.”

Rumors gave a contrasting vibe, by design — set on a beach, and launched with little promotion, early flyers didn’t even include Gerber’s name. “There were 500 people, then 700, then 1,000,” he recalls. “At some point there were 4,000 people on the beach, legs in the sand.” Just like the name would suggest, the party earned its word-of-mouth following, and the crowd eventually included celebrities like Oprah Winfrey and Kate Moss, though Gerber says the spirit of the event remained intimate. “The DJ booth was in a chiringuito, like inside the restaurant, you would not even see the DJs,” he says. “So I would personally play for like 200 people that I saw in front of me, but in the venue, there was like 4,000 people.”

The LA version emerged after promoter Adam Gold approached Gerber with the idea to do a block party in Chinatown 10 years ago. Chinatown had a history of banging music, with the punk rock/new wave hotspot Hong Kong Café welcoming bands in the late ’70s and early ’80s. But it was Gerber’s Rumors that would take the party into the plaza and establish the venue as a cherished sojourn for dance music lovers.





COURTESY OF GUY GERBER

“George Yu gave us permission, because they wanted to attract more people to Chinatown,” Gerber says of the owner of the Far East Plaza. “We couldn’t believe it. Back then it was impossible to do a party like that.” Since then, the space has come to host an array of DJs, mini-festivals, and block parties like KCRW’s Chinatown Summer Nights.

Gerber still sees Rumors as occupying its own lane. “A big part of those parties is the crowd,” he says. “It’s a very mixed crowd. House music lovers. It’s not druggy. It’s not pretentious. Just normal, cool people coming to listen to music.”

That atmosphere matters deeply to him. Gerber returns to the idea that dance music has changed dramatically since he first started. “When I got into DJing, it was about finding songs nobody else knows,” he says. “So you dig and you try to find something. Also there were no MP3s, so only the DJ had these songs. If you wanted to hear the music, you had to go to the club and hear the songs.”

Today, he says, many audiences arrive wanting reaffirmation. “People expect to hear the music they heard at home so they can show they know the songs,” he says. “I respect that, but I don’t feel comfortable giving them exactly what everybody else can give them.”

That resistance to predictability has made Gerber an enduring cult figure in

dance music. He says he is still chasing the emotional wave. “I try to find songs that are cool, sexy, emotional, heart-breaking, interesting and not so obvious.”

Beyond the booth, Gerber is entering a new chapter. He released the *Misiridou EP* in March, stepping away from the deep melodic house and techno that defined much of his catalog, instead drawing from a range of sounds like rock and rockabilly. He plays guitar himself, a return to an instrument he loved before electronic music took over. The title track is a cover of the Eastern Mediterranean folk song — [its earliest known recording](#)

dates to 1927 and was later popularized by the Dick Dale version in *Pulp Fiction*. The first recording carries a haunting quality that fascinated him.

“I promised myself that I’m going to make a guitar album,” he says. He is still finishing that full-length project, alongside some remaining club-oriented records, but the change of pace feels liberating. “I’m doing a little shift, because I’m still releasing more electronic music. But my real passion is guitar.”


Parallel to the music, Gerber has embraced [visual art](#). His solo exhibition *Separate Ways* opened in New York in

September 2025 before traveling to LA during Frieze Week. The show combines photography, paint, and handwritten text. For Gerber, art offers a different kind of creative release. “When I make music, it is a very emotional process,” he explains. “When I make art, it is a very intellectual process. So to give birth to my songs is very difficult for me. In the exhibition, it’s more conceptual. I do feel exposed, but not as much when I make music.” He says he’s enjoying visual art more than music at the moment.

He laughs about his lifelong aversion to preparation. A self-described poor student who frustrated teachers, especially in math — “The math teacher thought I was an idiot,” he says, “she knew the truth” — he still resists rehearsal. This extends to planned live shows incorporating guitar. “My live show is kind of the same, but it’s better because at least I know the story already.” He wants audiences to sense the tension of something unfolding in the moment rather than polished perfection. “I refuse to surrender to that world,” he says of today’s highly produced music industry. “I feel like I have to be like an island of truth when I just stand there and protest. And my only way to show it is when without preparation.”

His live show is slated to arrive in LA later this year. Until then, he will be helming a new residency in Ibiza, every Wednesday at Cova Santa. And after this weekend’s Chinatown run, the rumor is Rumors will be back in LA next year at a new venue with new surprises.

Surprise is the key idea Gerber keeps returning to as the conversation winds down. “I just feel like I have to make it more interesting,” he says. For the thousands who have danced at Rumors over the last decade plus, that uncertainty has always been the point.

Guy Gerber’s Rumors Chinatown Block Party is this Saturday, May 16. [Click here for tickets and more information.](#) Follow Guy Gerber on Instagram [@guygerber](#). 



THE FASHION ANARCHY OF 'I LOVE BOOSTERS' STARTS WITH SHIRLEY KURATA

BY MICHELE STUEVEN

Filmmaker and multi-hyphenate artist Boots Riley will bring his latest and arguably best work to theaters on Friday, May 22, in the upcoming NEON film, *I Love Boosters*, a colorful, surreal crime comedy that follows a group of professional female shoplifters in San Francisco targeting a high-end, cutthroat fashion mogul, delightfully played by Demi Moore.

Filling out the funky cast in the film that combines science fiction with social justice are Executive Producer Keke Palmer, Eliza Gonzalez, Naomi Ackie, Lakeith Stanfeld, an electrifying Poppy Liu, Will Poulter, and Don Cheadle.

In addition to explosive car chases, morphing aliens, and international teleporting with a multi-generational vibe, the rich fashion and style illustrated with eclectic designs significantly enhance the film's appeal and reinforce its themes of style and culture. It's costume designer **Shirley Kurata's** genius that sends the film over the top.

The acclaimed LA-based Japanese American costume designer and wardrobe stylist, best known for her Oscar-nominated work on the 2022 film *Everything Everywhere All at Once*, Kurata combines a plethora of costumes, including completely monochromatic scenes in colors of red, yellow, and green, where the five-finger discounts take place.

"To be able to work on a project with so much color was my dream," Kurata, who grew up in Monterey Park, where her parents ironically owned a laundromat, tells *LA Weekly*.

"In *Boosters*, we sourced all the clothes," she says. "The initial start was getting the colors. Christopher Glass, our production designer, was working out of Atlanta, and I was doing some prep in LA to ship out actual color tiles, so I had the colors of the sets. There are a million shades of yellow, and they had to match the yellow of the set. There were times when, once the set was built, I would bring outfits to the sets, hold them up, and take photos to see what worked and what didn't. It was a lot of costume house pulls and a lot of thrifting. It was fall/winter at that time, so it was hard to find any color. We also shopped online. None of the talent or the background was computer-generated, the cast was all dressed in the original colors."



Shirley Kurata
PHOTO: JULIA JOHNSON



Scenes from "I Love Boosters"

COURTESY OF NEON

Growing up in the San Gabriel Valley laundromat, Kurata's mom would sew all of her older siblings' clothes, and by the time she came around, it was pretty much just hand-me-downs. She attended a Catholic grade school and high school, spending most of her life in uniforms, which inspired her to break free, explore fashion, and find a style of her own. Working on an indie budget, being

a chronic thrifter, and with an explosive imagination, immersed herself in the multitude of electric costumes in *I Love Boosters*.

"I love thrifting and went to so many little stores," says Kurata, who had to create art on a practical level. "Atlanta has some great ones. It's tricky with men's wear, trying to find bright, vivid colors for them. We just went everywhere, finding what

we could. It was so much fun."

Was it intimidating dressing the fashion It Girl of the moment, Demi Moore?

"Demi was a dream to work with," says Kurata, who counts designers from Edith Head to Eiko Ishioka as her inspiration. "I initially sent her boards and told her I thought it would be a great idea if her character, who creates all this super bright and colorful clothing in stores, just

wore black and white and a little bit of grey, basically no color. I wanted it to be a little off kilter, like her apartment. When I showed her my ideas, she loved them and was on board. She even did some shopping herself, to be very avant-garde in a simple palette. She was so easy, fun, and receptive to work with. Everything looked great on her, and she was so game. Some of her pieces were a little over the top in their weirdness."

Kurata's mission aligns very much with Riley's, to work with creative people who convey a message in their story, like workers' rights or exploitation of workers, something that has haunted the fashion industry for years. It's a constant theme in *Boosters*. Depicting the need to stand together in protests, marches, and strikes for those who are underpaid. It's a message that is very important to Kurata, who says, "It's beyond just doing something cool and slick, it shows humanity and tells that story."

Upon completion of the film, some costumes were put in storage, and a big stock of brightly colored outfits was donated to Altadena Girls, who came together during the fires to help high school victims. "It was around their prom time, and we donated those costumes from *Boosters*. They were kind of bright and loud, but the girls loved them."

"She, like me, draws influences from many different things," Riley, known for his films *Sorry To Bother You* and *I Am Virgo* tells *LA Weekly*. "She doesn't think of one look as all one influence. She'll take something thought of as French and mix



COURTESY OF NEON / SHIRLEY KURATA

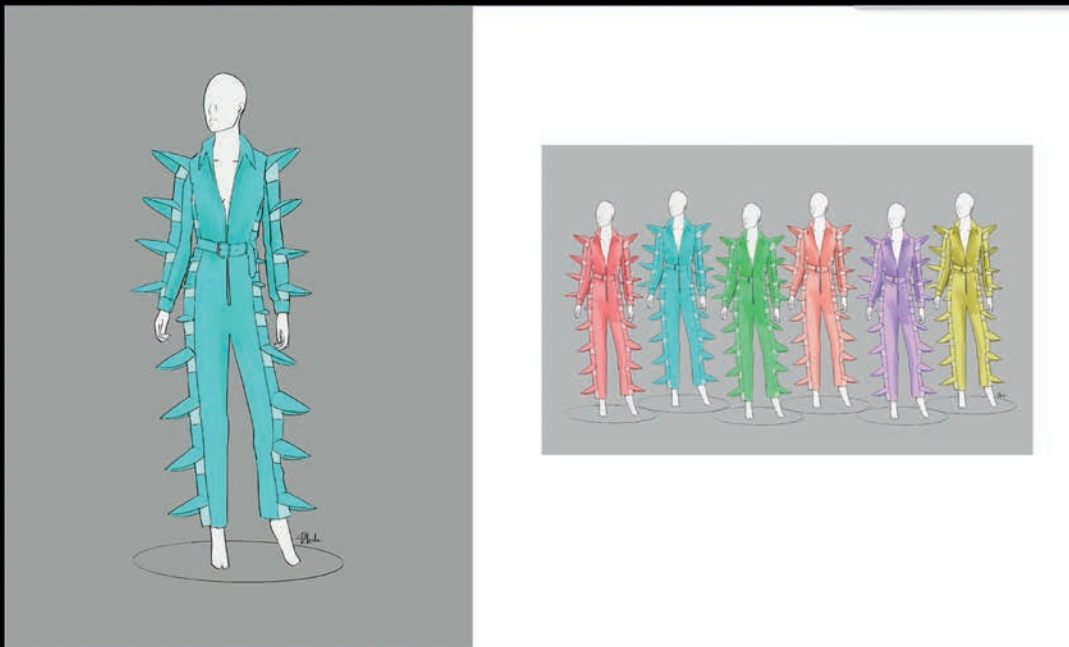


Shirley & Boots

COURTESY OF NEON / SHIRLEY KURATA

it with something Asian and put different textures and colors together and feel how it looks on a person's body. She also does the full head-to-toe one look, but it will be with that eye for different cuts and fittings. She's willing to experiment and just go for it. There were very few times, if any, I said no to any of her suggestions. We're on the same wavelength. I love the turquoise dress. I love the series of looks during the montage where they're coming out of the van. That's a poster people will want to have on their walls."

"I Love Boosters" is in theaters Friday, May 22. 📺



COURTESY OF NEON / SHIRLEY KURATA

LA WEEKLY CLASSIFIEDS

EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

Veterinarian: f/t; Diagnose & treat pet; Doctor of Veterinary Medicine or equiv, CA Veterinarian Lic; Resume: Yeah One, Inc @1451 W Artesia Bl #3, Gardena, CA 90248

FOOD

THE HIGH DESERT BEER AND WINE FESTIVAL, PLUS BBQ IN LONG BEACH — HERE'S WHAT'S POPPING UP

BY MICHELE STUEVEN



COURTESY HIGH DESERT BEER AND WINE FESTIVAL

The **High Desert Beer and Wine Festival** returns to Palmdale for its fourth annual outing on Saturday, June 20, at the **Palmdale Amphitheater**. The festival is 21 and over, and IDs are required upon entry.

Highlights of the evening include:

Craft beer and local breweries: Sample a variety of craft beers from top brewers in the region with unlimited tastings. Breweries confirmed so far include Malibu Brewing Company, Lucky Luke Brewing, Two Tracks Cellars, Santa Cruz Brewing, Brewery Draconum, Bravery Brewing, Antelope Valley Brewery, Tortugo Brewing Company, Shadow Grove Brewing, and Freedom Juice.

Fine wines and local vineyards: Discover California wines with unlimited tastings. Wineries confirmed so far include Tehachapi Winery, Stephen Hemmert Wines, Le Vigne Winery, Callaway Wines, Antelope Valley Winery, and Honey Pot Meadery.

Live music and entertainment from local and regional artists, including the

first Bruno Mars tribute band, **Uptown Funk**, Reality Check, **Wildfire Arts**, and DJ Aone Morris (**DJ Aone**), “educator by day, DJ by night.”

Lawn games and interactive experiences are also available, along with food trucks and food pairings from local and regional vendors.

General Admission and VIP tickets include unlimited beer and wine tastings and are available at a discounted early bird rate at www.HighDesertBeerAndWineFest.com. VIP tickets include early access, a special entry lane, specialty tastings, concert seating, and more.

In celebration of **National BBQ Month**, the **4th Annual Long Beach BBQ Fest** returns on Saturday, May 23, and Sunday, May 24.

Organized by Ian and Qiana Mafnas, proprietors of the wildly popular **Axiom Kitchen Smoked Meats & BBQ**, sponsored by non-profit **Noah's Arc Foundation**, dozens of BBQ and other vendors will gather at **Rainbow Lagoon**

to offer their smoked, sauced, and rubbed specialties to BBQ lovers.

Some of the vendors include **Axiom Smoked Meats & BBQ**, **El Guero y La Flaca**, **Magillas BBQ**, **Bully's Craft BBQ**, **Big J's SoCal BBQ**, **Avalon Smokehouse**, **Big Sal's Up in Smoke**, **Texas Craft Barbeque**, **OC Smokehouse**, and **Vinegar and Smoke**. Tickets can be purchased [HERE](#).

Soft shell crab season has officially begun, and dishes are now live at both **Water Grill** and **King's Fish House**.

At **Water Grill**, the wild soft shell crab is offered in two preparations, one with watermelon and cucumber salad and a brown butter soy ginger sauce, and another with roasted eggplant, coconut rice, and a Thai red curry sauce.

At **King's Fish House**, the dish leans more classic, with a Southern-style fried version served with corn succotash and remoulade, as well as a piccata-style preparation with lemon butter, capers, and Israeli couscous.

Soft shell crabs are blue crabs harvested just after molting, when their shells are still tender and fully edible. The overall season runs from spring through early fall, and you can also find them at Santa Monica Seafood for home cooks.

In celebration of **World Whisky Day**, a culinary collaboration is coming to **The Lobster** for a one-night-only five-course whisky pairing dinner on Thursday, May 21. For the first time, Govind Armstrong, Executive Chef of The Lobster, will join forces with Job Carder, Executive Chef of **Michael's Santa Monica**, for a collaborative menu. Each of the five courses will be paired with expressions from Nikka Whisky & Spirits, the Japanese producer founded in 1934, known for blending Scottish tradition with Japanese precision.

The evening starts with a welcome cocktail alongside Armstrong's house-made pizza paired with Nikka Coffey Vodka. Other highlights include Dungeness crab and avocado salad with preserved lemon, chive oil, toasted buckwheat, and yuzu gelée paired with Nikka Coffey Gin; braised short rib gyoza dumplings with enoki mushrooms, micro shiso, garlic chive oil, and roasted tomato miso broth paired with Nikka Days Blended Whisky; togarashi-crusted Ibérico presa steak paired with Nikka Taketsuru Pure Malt Whisky; and a special dessert paired with Nikka Whisky From The Barrel to conclude the experience. 🍷



Soft Shell Crab Red Curry

COURTESY WATER GRILL