

SPONSORED

LA WEEKLY

MEET DAISY, PAQUE AND STELLA.

THREE TALENTLESS GIRLS.

HUNGRY FOR FAME.

"A disguised Barbie mail bomb that shows how insipid and money-drenched youth culture can be."

- THE VILLAGE VOICE

"Sad, sassy and salient."

- ELLE MAGAZINE

"The starry-eyed girls at the center of this rock-and-roll fairy tale are the predecessors of today's selfie-snappers" - Mona Awad

*we're
so
famous*

a novel

JAIME CLARKE

25TH
ANNIVERSARY
ANNOTATED
EDITION

"This satire works, sliding down as silvery and toxic as liquid mercury."

- ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

"Clarke keeps the satire sharp."

- SPIN MAGAZINE

Jaime Clarke pulls off a sympathetic act of sustained male imagination: entering the minds of innocent teenage girls dreaming of fame. A glibly surreal world where the only thing wanted is notoriety and all you really desire leads to celebrity and where stardom is the only point of reference. What's new about this novel is how unconsciously casual the characters' drives are. This lust is as natural to them as being American-it's almost a birthright. Imagine Britney Spears narrating *The Day of the Locust* as a gentle fable and you'll get the idea.

- Bret Easton Ellis, author of *American Psycho*

25TH ANNIVERSARY ANNOTATED EDITION

weresofamous.com

LA WEEKLY

JULY 17 - 23, 2026 | VOL. 48 / NO. 37 | LAWEEKLY.COM

BEHIND THE SCENES WITH **LEVITY**

BASS MUSIC'S FASTEST RISING TRIO, AND BIGGEST FANS

BY CAROLINE CHANG



ON THE COVER:

Photo: Shutterfinger

Design: Mark Stefanos

MUSIC 2-4

Behind the scenes with the hottest trio of dudes in Bass music: Levity.

BY CAROLINE CHANG

CLASSIFIEDS..... 4

LA WEEKLY

EDITOR IN CHIEF: MARK STEFANOS

SENIOR EDITOR: MICHELE STUEVEN



MUSIC

BEHIND THE SCENES WITH LEVITY: BASS MUSIC'S FASTEST RISING TRIO, AND BIGGEST FANS

BY CAROLINE CHANG

By the time I step into Levity's trailer, it's already overflowing. Not in the chaotic, egos-bumping kind of way, but in the lived-in sense — like a control room that accidentally turned into a house party. VJs perch on Pelican cases like office chairs, flipping through

visuals one last time. Camera bags are littered in every available nook and cranny. Someone locked in on their laptop and crushing a yerba mate. Someone else is dancing around pouring shots. The air hums with that specific pre-set electricity that only exists when a show hasn't started yet, but it's already very much

underway.

At the center of it all, Levity and ALLEYCVT sit shoulder-to-shoulder at a vanity meant for makeup and fit checks, staring closely down at laptops. They're headphones-on, building, tweaking, shaping their set in real time. Slapping each other's shoulders when they make something sick they think the crowd will love. It's casual and deeply focused all at once, the kind of scene that feels less like preparation and more like muscle memory.

This is Levity in their element: half chaos, half control, fully immersed.

For the uninitiated, Levity is an electronic music trio known for genre-bending, cheeky bass-driven beats. Their unique sound, and their commitment to it, have propelled them from the local Chicago circuit to headlining major festival stages in just a few short years. Composed of John Hauldren, PJ Carberry, and Josh Tarum, the group has been releasing music for almost a decade. Their rise seems fast, but their tenure as artists and dubstep lovers runs long.

LA Weekly caught up with John and PJ backstage before and after their B2B set with fellow dubstep superstar ALLEYCVT last Saturday, June 20, at Zombie Apocalypse Music Festival in Long Beach.

"We feel at home in this," PJ Carberry of Levity tells us. The no-sleep, running-on-fumes, everything-needs-to-happen-now energy. The push to finish a set in two hours because that's just how it goes. "It almost feels weird when we're home for too long," he says. "Like we're not doing something and we should be."

That constant motion has defined the last few years for the trio, years consumed by the demands of a rapid ascent without much time to stop and process it. Coachella and Ultra back-to-back. Sold-out tour runs. Festival stages they once



Levity with ALLEYCVT (center)

PHOTO: CAROLINE CHANG @CAROCHANGCREATIVE



PHOTO: CAROLINE CHANG @CAROCHANGCREATIVE

stood in front of as teenagers, now seeing them from the other side of the barricade, behind the decks. The milestones keep stacking, but Levity rarely lingers on them.

"It still feels the same," John says. "Like the day after Electric Forest when people started finding us" (Levity catapulted to fame via a viral Electric Forest set in 2023) The scale has changed, but the internal temperature hasn't. Head down. Keep going. "We have so many goals we want to accomplish, so we're always looking towards those."

"But we wouldn't want it any other way," PJ adds.

That mentality is deeply tied to how Levity came up, not just as artists, but as fans. Long before they were booked on the lineups they once obsessed over, they were in the crowd, learning dubstep culture the same way their fans do. I ask them if seeing their fans sometimes feels like looking into a mirror and they enthusiastically interrupt me: "Exactly."

"We always ask ourselves if I were a fan, what would I want? What would I want my favorite artist to do in this situation?" John explains. "We always said if we ever got to this position, we would be the people we always imagined our favorite artists to be." That shows up everywhere: in how they treat openers, in how they structure their shows, in the intentional decision not to "nerf" support acts with lower sound or stripped-back production. Levity watches their openers' sets. They invite them into the green room. They undersell their tour stops for crowd control. They make space.

"What would Skrillex do?" John adds

— WWSO.

"We're fans first," John says, simply. And that philosophy extends beyond logistics. It's baked into their identity. There's a humility that runs through every part of the conversation, a disbelief that anyone could feel about their music the way they once felt about someone else's.

"It doesn't feel real," he admits. "Talking to fans sometimes feels like I'm having a conversation I've already had, but on the other side."

They're in the process of chronicling the ups and downs of their journey through their records, with their EP *Escapism Vol. 1* released September 25, 2024, and the next installment *Escapism Vol. 2* expected to drop later this year. "It's like some of our favorite music that we've ever made," John says about the new album. "It is definitely a bit more sad and slower at times — inspired in part by emotions we've experienced personally but also by stories that we hear from friends and people we've been seeing in the [dance music] scene."

"We want to portray those feelings to everyone and remind people that it's okay to feel this way, you know. It's okay to be down. It's okay to be sad, feel stuck ... You've got to accept life for those ups and downs because that's just how life is. And you have to appreciate the highs and the lows — appreciating the lows so that the highs go even higher."

"We're celebrating both the good and the bad parts of life," PJ adds. "The music can speak for itself, and however someone relates to it, that's what it is. But we hope we can help people."

Levity's excitement about the music

they're creating, and commitment to the message they're sending, means the record remains a work in progress, but it's a storyline they're intent on seeing through. The boys let on that eventually there will be an *Escapism Vol. 3* and that this project will continue to weave through their evolution as artists.

There's dissonance at the ends, between who they were and who they're still grinding to become, but the unpredictable twists in the middle really tie it all together. They make the journey meaningful.

For PJ, playing these Southern California shows hit especially hard. Though Chicago has become their home base, this is where his early memories live: Insomniac festivals, the NOS Center in San Bernardino, nights spent watching from the crowd and imagining something just out of reach.

"I've been to so many Insomniac festivals at the NOS Center growing up," he says. "It was a dream to play there honestly."

Now, standing backstage instead of in line, that dream has quietly materialized. And yet, it hasn't softened them. If anything, it's made them more aware of what this music and this community can do.

"This music changed our lives," John says. "It changed who we are as people."

That belief — that the scene can make you better, more open, more connected — is what keeps Levity moving at this pace. It's why their green room feels like a den instead of a closed door. Where their videographer can share a White Claw with PJ's parents while talking to this journalist about how crazy it's all been. A space

where time is shared and not held — an extension of everything they're building, not a waiting room.

Even now, moments before walking out to play a massive B2B set that's been partially built at a makeup vanity, there's no posturing. Just focus. Laptops close. Some laughs. Cheers. Someone calls time. The room shifts.

And then, just like that, they're gone. Back into the noise, the lights, the thing that still somehow doesn't feel real.

We caught back up with John and PJ of Levity for a post-game interview after their set to learn more about what Levity is building, resonating with, and holding onto.

LA Weekly: Thinking of senior class superlatives — class clown, best dressed — what would you give yourselves?

Levity: Josh is easily class clown. PJ is best dressed. He's not going to say he's best dressed, but he is best dressed. John might actually be class clown, I don't know other superlatives so let's call it a tie.

What's your favorite post-show snack?

Pizza or chicken nuggets. We never get it, but I would love chicken nuggets. From McDonald's.

What's on your pizza?

John: Cheese for me. PJ: Pepperoni, you know, simple.

What's something that's always on your rider?

Chex Mix, grapes, Legos ... and one hand-drawn picture of the three of us. We have a whole collection. Some of them are stick figures. Some of them are like



PHOTO: CAROLINE CHANG @CAROCHANGCREATIVE

actual works of art. Some of them we've had are like ones with our hairy buttholes in them or something like that, people do crazy shit. They get real creative with it, which is why we do it.

What's one thing you do to stay sane on the road?

Call our girlfriends or bring our girlfriends, ideally. But honestly, just having each other is by far the thing that keeps us the most sane on the road. When it's like no sleep, delayed flight, we can all joke about it with each other, and you know, hang out and poke fun, it makes it much better. The good moments and the bad moments.

What's the most memorable set you've ever played?

Electric Forest 2025 (the B3B set Levity played with Tape B and Crankdat). I think Tape B and Crankdat would agree that it felt like we all went from "we're homies" to "we're actual brothers" in just that hour and a half. We were really just fucking around up there and playing crazy songs, it was so much fun — it soul-bonded us. And it was the biggest set any of us had ever done individually, and we all got to do it together.

Do you have a favorite song that you've made?

It changes a lot. Right now? It's actually unreleased — we have a collab with K-Flay. That's probably my favorite. Of released songs, I'd say "Heartbreak," maybe. Or "By My Side."

Favorite track to play that's not yours That also changes all the time. Right now it's this new GRiZ ID, it's almost always a new GRiZ ID.

Who's someone you think is next up in bass music?

Machaki, Costa... I'm trying to think, there's a lot.

Who do you think is underrated in bass music, big or small?

Xaetor. Probably the most underrated.

Jiqui, Claybrook, Saka and Fly. LYNX, too, it really doesn't matter how big LYNX gets, he deserves more.

What do you think is the next big raving trend?

I don't know what the next big raving trend is, but I feel like what we're doing now is building a world. We want certain shows of ours to feel like movies, and our LASERSHIP tour was like that. The production is interactive with the story and everything works together.

That and lasers. For a while, it was like, "How big of a TV screen can we make," you know? But I just feel like lasers are the big thing right now.

I was going to ask, lasers or pyros?

Both. But if we had to pick, we love lasers. We're doing that till we die.

Do you ever get writer's block?

All the time, and every artist would say the same.

How do you get over it?

You need to take a break. Stop producing for a couple days, then make something totally different, like a rap beat. And go into it with the intention of, "It doesn't matter what I make, I'm just going to make something." The rap beat could be garbage, but you make it anyway and tell yourself, "I'm happy with that."

Another way is a sound design session. We just sit down and make weird sounds in Serum. You'll make a weird sound and be like, wait, I kind of hear something now. A lot of the time we'll get inspiration from that.

Dream artist collab that you haven't done yet?

[In unison] SkilleX. Flux Pavilion would also be awesome.

Is there an origin story behind your guys' hats?

John: The bucket hat — it's the same one every single show. I refuse to wear a different one, but don't worry, I wash it.

Do you ever lose it?

John: No, it's like my whole life. I keep this thing close to the chest. Same with the bandana, I have a white one and a black one, but I usually wear the black one. I found it on the ground at Lollapalooza in 2019, and it wasn't anyone's in the passing area so I kept it.

What advice would you give someone just starting out in producing or DJing with big dreams of doing what you guys do?

The only thing that can stop you is yourself. Really. The only thing that can stop you is yourself. The work you put in is the work you get out. Every single thing that could ever go through your head — imposter syndrome, "I'm not that good," "I forgot how to produce" — it's still experienced by even the biggest and best producers in the world. We were talking to GRiZ and he still feels that way. But if you make music because you love making

it, not with the intention of getting big ... you dedicate your life to it, you'll get better faster. And anyone can do it. But it takes a long time.

Would you have different advice for someone who's been in the game a decade and just hasn't had their big moment yet?

Just keep going. And be prepared for the moments. It's like 50% luck, but it's 50% being prepared. You know what they say: luck is when timing and preparation meet.

We had an indie side project and our first song got put on the Fresh Finds Indie playlist on Spotify, and Darkroom Records reached out asking for demos and a meeting, and we weren't prepared. They ghosted us. But when the opportunity to step in at Electric Forest came in 2023, we were ready. You never know when the opportunity will strike, but you

have to be prepared and ready to go.

Tell me about one of your biggest "I made it" moments.

Hard Summer 2024. We walked over to see the crowd before we went on and it was empty. Then we got on stage and it was slammed out to the back. And we were up against a bunch of acts that we would want to see like Kenny Beats and SOFI TUKKER. We were just going to go up there and have fun, but we were like, "Holy shit, people are here for us."

Last one: what's one thing you still want to accomplish as artists?

So much. Tomorrowland. A debut album. We want to headline EDC, headline Forest, headline all these things. Arena tours. World tours. And headline Soldier Field in Chicago, I think that's the biggest dream. [L]

Follow Levity on Instagram @levity.music.

LA WEEKLY CLASSIFIEDS

EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

Network and Computer Systems Administrator, F/T. Bachelor's in Information Technology, Computer Science, Computer Engineering, Applied Mathematics, or a related field. Mail resume: 1st Haven Recovery, 13601 Morrison St, Sherman Oaks, Ca 91423

Market Research Analyst, F/T. Master's in business administration, economics, management, or any related. Mail resume: Cafe Mafe Inc. 546 S San Fernando Blvd, Burbank CA 91501

Accountant, F/T. Bachelor's Accounting, finance, economics, or any related. Mail resume: Autocred, Inc. 500 N Brand blvd, ste 690, Glendale, CA 91203

Market Research Analyst, F/T. Master's in business administration, economics management, or any related. Mail resume: International Pita Bread Inc, 16101 S Grand Vista Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90023

REPORTING & TREASURY MGRS, Los Angeles, CA area. Lead the design & delivery of forecasts & perf. reports, guiding analysts to produce actionable insights that support executive decision-making. Oversee prep of portfolio perf. reports & present key findings to inform portfolio strategy. Salary: \$109,325.00/yr. Send res to: Westlake Services, LLC dba Westlake Financial at recruitment@hankeygroup.com

Architectural Drafter - Prepare & update drawings, plans, elevations, sections, construction details w/ CAD under licensed architect/Sr. designer. Req: Associates in architectural studies, CAD Technology or rtd. or equiv. CV to Jon Brouse Architecture & Design: jon@jonbrousead.com. Location: Studio City

Skechers USA, Inc. is seeking an **International Planning Manager** in Manhattan Beach, CA to lead, manage, and develop International Planning and Merchandising for the company's Joint Ventures (JV), Subsidiaries, and Distributor Wholesale channels. Must have a Bachelor's degree, or foreign equivalent, in Business Administration, Finance, or a closely related field + 1 year of post-baccalaureate experience as an International Planning Analyst, Data Analyst, or a related inventory planning role in the retail industry. Salary range: \$120,286 - \$126,300 /year. To apply, please email resume to: talentacquisition@skechers.com

Mfg. Planning Mgr.: B.S. in Mechatronics, Mech. or Industrial Eng., or related: 2 yrs. Aerospace/Def/Auto or rel. industry mfg/planning exp. with Excel VBA, SolidWorks/NX & PLM. \$81,286/yr. Mail resume to Attn: HR DIR/Trio Mfg. Inc., 601 Lairport St., El Segundo, CA 90245

Asst. Gen. Mgr.: Bch. in Business Admin, or related. Mail resume to Tedpanich, Inc., 9839 Topanga Canyon Blvd., Chatsworth, CA 91311

Senior Manager, SAP Consulting, PricewaterhouseCoopers Advisory Services LLC, Los Angeles, CA. Lead engagements to assist clients with maximizing the value of their SAP investment with offerings that address sales, finance, supply chain, engineering, and human capital. Req. Bach's deg or frgn equiv in Engg Mgmt, Bus Admin, Comp Sci, Info Systems, or rel fld + 6 yrs rel wrk exp. of which at least 5 yrs must be post-bach's prograss rel work exp. OR Mstr's deg or frgn equiv in Engg Mgmt, Bus Admin, Comp Sci, Info Systems, or rel fld +4 yrs rel wrk exp. 50% telecommuting permitted. Must be able to commute to the designated local office. Dmstc&/or Intl trvl up to 80% is required. Mult. Pos. aval. Sal. range: \$232,138 - \$237,000/yr. Please apply by sending your resume to US_PwC_Career_Recruitment@pwc.com, specifying Job Code CA4891 in the subject line.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT ANALYST: Rsch. Mkt Cond. in regional & national areas to determine pot. sales of exist. svcs. & svcs TBD. \$52,707/Yr. INGLEWOOD, CA Send Resume: White Bear Corporation, 1009 W. Arbor Vitae Str, Inglewood, CA 90301

Senior Associate, Wealth and Asset Management - Tax, PwC US Tax LLP, Los Angeles, CA. Help clients meet their tax obligations while managing the impact tax has on their business. Req. Bach's deg or frgn equiv in Accontg, Bus Admin, Tax or a rel fld, + 2 yrs of rel wrk exp. 50% telecommuting permitted. Must be able to commute to the designated local office. Domestic and/or international travel up to 20% is required. Mult. Pos. aval. Sal. range: \$125,000 to \$144,000/yr. Please apply by sending your resume to US_PwC_Career_Recruitment@pwc.com, specifying Job Code CA4951 in the subject line.

Skechers USA, Inc. is seeking a **Sr. Footwear Designer** in Manhattan Beach, CA to integrate the understanding of footwear product design, manufacturing processes, production technologies, and materials with Footwear design excellence to develop the next generations of footwear products. Must have a Bachelor's Degree, or foreign equivalent in Footwear or Industrial Design + 5 years of post-baccalaureate experience as a Footwear Designer or a related shoe designer position. Must travel 4% domestically and 8% internationally for market research, product development, and trade shows. Salary range: \$140,000 - \$147,000 /year. To apply, please email resume to: talentacquisition@skechers.com

Farmers (Woodland Hills, CA) seeks **Agile Dev Team Member V** to design/support bus. apps aligned w/ bus. processes incl. legacy mainframe billing sys. (ARS) & platforms such as FSCD, req. strong functional/technical ins. billing knowl. Remote work option from anywhere in U.S. w/occ. travel to HQs. Salary: \$184,558/yr. Apply at Farmers.com/Careers, Job ID 34963

CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER: Support Proj. Engg w/tech. doc, coord. site activities, review plans, prep cost est. \$100k/Yr. SAN DIMAS, CA Send Resume: Walton Construction Inc, 358 E. Foothill Blvd, Ste 100, San Dimas, CA 91773

Success Yoga seeks a **Seamstress/Tailor (ST)** and a **Product Manager (PM)** to work in Corona, CA. ST reqs 2 yrs exp as Seamstress, Tailor or in a Sewing Staff position. PM reqs 3 yrs exp as Manager, Director, or Dept Head in garment industry. PM also reqs a US/Foreign Cert. of Professional Training in Advanced Sewing Techniques. Email resume to successyoga.jobs@outlook.com w/ ref no 2026-19 for ST or 2026-21 for PM & ref this ad.

Farmers (Woodland Hills, CA) seeks **Analytics Engineer Sr. Director** to lead enterprise data/analytics strategy, support bus. decisions, cust./agent exp., profitability & growth, and manage data solutions team. Occ. U.S. travel to various Farmers offices. Remote work option from anywhere in U.S. Salary: \$237,141/yr. Apply at Farmers.com/Careers, Job ID: 35338

ACCOUNTANT: Perf. Daily recon. of rental income, fuel charges & ins. \$64,917/Yr. INGLEWOOD, CA Send Resume: White Bear Corporation, 1009 W Arbor Vitae St. Inglewood, CA 90301

Graphic Designer: Bachelor's degree in Graphic Design, Fine Arts, or related. Wage: \$48,131/Yr. Mail Resume: CGTEC Inc. 18400 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748

DOLLY MIXTURE

**WITH
PHANTASM
MASTERFUL JOHNSON**

SPACELAND

THU. APR. 15⁷ PM

ALSO BY JAIME CLARKE



VERNON DOWNS

“A gripping, hypnotically written and unnerving look at the dark side of literary adulation.”

-TOM PERROTTA, author of *Election*, *Little Children*, and *The Leftovers*



WORLD GONE WATER

“Travels into the dark heart of male/female relations. Read and be astounded.”

-AMY GRACE LOYD, author of *The Affairs of Others*



GARDEN LAKES

“It takes some nerve to revisit a bulletproof classic, but Jaime Clarke does so, with elegance and a cool contemporary eye, in this cunningly crafted homage to *Lord of the Flies*.”

-JULIA GLASS, National Book Award-winning author of *Three Junes*



MINOR CHARACTERS

With a Foreword by Jonathan Lethem, and an Introduction by Laura van den berg, this stirring collection both stands on its own and enriches the novels in Clarke's trilogy. Featuring original stories by Mona Awad, Christopher Boucher, Kenneth Calhoun, Nina de Gramont, Ben Greenman, Annie Hartnett, Owen King, Neil LaBute, J. Robert Lennon, Lauren Mechling, Shelly Oria, Stacey Richter, Joseph Salvatore, Andrea Seigel, and Daniel Torday.

Sponsored by



203bedford.com

TYPICAL

a microcast by
JAIME CLARKE
typicalpodcast.com

