

LAW WEEKLY

THE HISTORIC HERALD EXAMINER BUILDING GETS A NEW LIFE
YAAMAVA RESORT & CASINO GAMBLES ON MUSICAL MAKEOVER

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Getting Lashed

L.A. Nightclub *The Lash* Closes After A Decade

By Brett Callwood



CALENDAR

GO EDITORS' PICKS

ARTS

THURSDAY, JANUARY 19

Dance Camera West at Barnsdall Theater. The Dance Camera West film festival, now on its 21st edition, fosters ground-breaking talent in the dance film genre. The 2023 festival screens more than 60 works of cinema; highlights include the L.A. premiere of *Bella* by Bridget Murnane, celebrating L.A. dance icon and activist Bella Lewitsky, DCW's signature Visibility program to support underrepresented artists, the premiere of *Sheila* and other films by guest artist Gabri Christa, a filmmaker lunch and discussion at Cara Hotel followed by a tour of Frank Lloyd Wright's Hollyhock House, and the Dance Film Lab all-levels workshop. *4800 Hollywood Blvd., Los Feliz; Thursday-Saturday, January 19-21; various tickets & passes available; all outdoor screenings are free; dancecamerawest.org.*

Patrick Quinn: Bar Keeps: A Collection of California's Best Cocktail Napkins at Village Well Books. Angel City Press author Patrick Quinn's book (*Angel City Press*) is a fun and fabulous tour of cocktail culture in the Golden State. Whether you're the type to visit roadside diners, chic hotels, hidden dives, fancy restaurants, tiki bars, or, ahem, the neighborhood exotic dancer's nightclub, napkin collector Patrick Quinn probably beat you there. Quinn guides a rollicking napkin-gathering road trip with stops from Trader Vic's in Oakland, to the Chinese Sky Room in San Francisco's Chinatown, Joe DiMaggio's Grotto on Fisherman's Wharf, Fred Harvey's in Union Station, and Little Shrimp in Laguna — with fuzzy memories of fuzzy navels in between. *9900 Culver Blvd., Culver City; Thursday, January 19, 7pm; free; shop.villagewell.com.*

FRIDAY, JANUARY 20

Future Art Awards: WOMAN. LIFE. FREEDOM. at Mozaik Philanthropy (Virtual). An arts-based expression of solidarity with the people of Iran and their intersectional movement for freedom and human rights. Since 22-year-old Jina Mahsa Amini died in police custody on September 16, thousands have been

imprisoned and hundreds have lost their lives in an escalating humanitarian crisis. MOZAIK Philanthropy launched an open call to creatives wishing to express support for the movement; artists all across the globe responded to the call, including hundreds from inside Iran. The virtual exhibition features over 50 contemporary artworks, and serves as a dedication to their bravery. All artworks will be shown anonymously for security purposes and in solidarity with all those who risk their lives for freedom. *From January 20; free; mozaikphilanthropy.org.*

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21

Janet Werner: Call Me When You Start Wearing Red at Anat Ebgi. Known for painting psychological portraits of women, Werner examines ideas of being divided, dualities of human nature, and inner multiplicity — externalizing these psychological splits within her 'broken pictures.' Side-stepping narrative, her subjects present more as ideas — vessels for viewers to pour themselves into. We relate to them through their disruptions: shrinking heads, contorting bodies, clipping figures upside-down, or partial obscuration. Nonetheless the works possess a seductive openness, a vulnerability manifested through the figures' gazes that allows viewers to project onto them. *6150 Wilshire Blvd., Miracle Mile; Opening reception: Saturday, January 21, 5-8pm; On view through February 25; anatebgi.com.*

Dani Tull: Splitting Fog, Flowering Stone at The Landing. Developing a method Tull describes as "narrative abstraction," his paintings probe the enduring flow of personal and collective memory through an exacting formal repertoire. The paintings' bold, laborious linework backgrounded by dynamic swaths of color stained on raw linen canvas congeal into what the artist calls streams. These multi-colored streams swirl across his surfaces, at times leading viewers back to the surface of the painting, and at others, conjuring voids or opaque portals to interminably deep space. *5118 W. Jefferson Blvd., West Adams; Opening reception: Saturday, January 21, 6-9pm; On view through March 4; free; thelandinggallery.com.*

Do You Feel Anger? at Circle X Theatre Co. The #MeToo movement meets cancel culture in Mara Nelson-Greenberg's outrageous new comedy. When Soya is hired as an empathy coach at a debt collection agency, she finds she has her work cut out for her. These employees can barely identify what an emotion is, much less practice deep, radical compassion for others. As they painstakingly stumble towards enlightenment, someone keeps mugging Eva in the kitchen, and the unspoken dynamics of their seemingly blithe workplace culture become increasingly unsettling. What is the absurdity — and danger — of a world where the feelings of some people matter more than those of oth-

ers? *Atwater Village Theater, 3269 Casitas Ave.; Performances: January 21 - February 25; \$30; circlextheatre.org.*

Trade Fare Social at Angels Gate Cultural Center. Artists Kelli Rae Adams, Melissa Bouwman, Mark Rumsey, and the Institute 4 Labor Generosity Workers & Uniforms engage the audience as participants — not mere viewers — in art as social practice. Works address present-day challenges of the Student Debt Crisis, Bodily Autonomy, Sustainability, and Economic Systems, offering a reflection on the viewer/maker relationship, and privileging the collaborative processes. The modes of physical production and materials also deepens existing subtexts about the worldwide web, the handmade vs. mass produced, and toxic consumerism, positioning the artist as a change agent. *3601 S. Gaffey St., San Pedro; Opening reception: Saturday, January 21, 3-5pm; On view through March 25; free; angelsgateart.org.*

SUNDAY, JANUARY 22

Rethinking the West: Promise and Crisis of a Concept at the Wende Museum. A transatlantic program series to explore changing definitions of common ideas of the West, taking into consideration the global developments amplified by the war in Ukraine. By focusing on cultural, political and artistic themes, the program invites scholars, artists and intellectuals from different backgrounds and yields, to discuss these changing cultural concepts. As part of this series, the Tommas Mann House and the Wende Museum have co-organized a panel discussion about shifting perspectives of the West through the lens of the visual arts. *10808 Culver Blvd., Culver City; Sunday, January 22, 2pm; free; wendemuseum.org.*

MONDAY, JANUARY 23

The Super 8 Years at Laemmle. Annie Ernaux, the French autofiction celebrity, narrates footage of her own young family's life from 1972-81 in paradigmatic Super 8 home movies now edited together by Ernaux's son, David, and presented more or less straight as discovered. They travel all over Europe and as far away as Chile, and Annie's husband Philippe's footage focuses on local sights and the three-quarters of the family in front of the camera semi-comfortably performing as themselves. But, as Ernaux's prosy narration tells us in tense detail, we're not seeing what really happened, what went on beneath the surface of the family and the marriage. How could we? *Laemmle Santa Monica, Claremont, Glendale; Monday-Tuesday, January 23-24; \$15; laemmle.com.*

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25

The Political Mandate of the Arts with David Horvitz at the Wende Museum (Virtual). A new monthly program series on art and politics in times of crises asks, Does art have a role in addressing social issues, promoting social

justice, or in defending democracy when it comes under pressure? In conversation with visual artists, musicians, dancers, writers, theater and filmmakers, cultural critics, curators and others, the series will explore how the arts can make a difference in times of social and political crisis. The guest speaker for the opening program is artist David Horvitz, who uses art books, photography, performance art, and mail art as media for his work, and is part of the Wende Museum's current exhibition *For Ruth*, The Sky in Los Angeles: Ruth Wolf-Rehfeldt and David Horvitz. *Wednesday, January 25, 4:15pm; free; wendemuseum.org.*

MUSIC

JANUARY 20-26

Love Band featuring Johnny Echols The Wayfarer

Sometimes you've got to get what you can get. Love is one of Los Angeles' greatest bands but singer Arthur Lee has been gone from us for 17 years now. Guitarist Johnny Echols is picking the bag with his Love Band, and he's celebrating 55 years of the classic *Forever Changes* album at the Wayfarer. *6 p.m. on Sunday, January 22 at the Wayfarer, \$15, wayfarer.com.*

PH-1

The Fonda Theatre

PH-1 is the stage name of Korean-American rapper Park Jun-won, signed to Jay Park's H1GHR MUSIC label. According to the press blurb, "the three keywords he pursues in his music are truth, positivity, and experience," which is reflected in his work. See for yourself. *8 p.m. on Wednesday, January 25 at the Fonda Theatre, \$100+, fondatheatre.com.*

Gene Loves Jezebel Whisky A Go Go

This would be Michael Aston's version of Gene Loves Jezebel, as the Aston twins are still apparently at war. We got Jay Aston's band here for Cruel World, but Michael's is the US-based group. It is what it is. Willen McCormick, Dizzylilacs, Boats in Shorts, Goodnights, Dazmin D'Leon & Ditch the Ego, and Belle & Rudy also play. *7 p.m. on Thursday, January 26 at the Whisky A Go Go, \$20+, whiskyagogo.com.*

Shangela The Wiltern

She appeared on two seasons of Ru Paul's Drag Race, and released her first single, "Call Me Laquifa," in 2011. That's a 12-year music career for Shangela at this point. She's recorded with Ariana Grande too. The lord only knows what she has in store for us at this L.A. show. *7 p.m. on Thursday, January 26 at The Wiltern, \$39+, livenation.com.*

JOURNALISM RISES LIKE A PHOENIX IN THE HISTORIC HERALD EXAMINER BUILDING, ASU CAMPUS

Arizona State University breathes life into L.A. History

BY MICHELE STUEVEN

Designed by William Randolph Hearst's beloved architect Julia Morgan in 1914, who also helped create Hearst Castle and worked with the family for three generations, the crumbling Herald Examiner building on Broadway in downtown Los Angeles has undergone a multimillion dollar renovation. It's the new home of Arizona State University's Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication state-of-the-art satellite campus.

The building's stunning lobby entrance has been meticulously restored to its original splendor after years of neglect. The campus is home to Cronkite News' L.A. Bureau, as well as video/audio editing bays, a broadcast studio, a 3D studio, classrooms, and a two-story event space. Plans for a restaurant on the street level are underway.

The renovations, which started well before the pandemic, already included fitting all the classrooms with virtual and Zoom capabilities, so students at the satellite campuses are one with the main campus in Phoenix. The 85,770 square foot space includes four floors and was designed by the L.A.-based Gensler architecture firm. The building was bought by The Georgetown Company in 2015, which redeveloped the property.

Hearst founded the Los Angeles Examiner in 1903 and enjoyed its heyday in the 1940s, when they had a crime and scandal bent. The Examiner was the first to break the Black Dahlia story, with reporters arriving even before the police at the crime scene in Leimert Park and accessing evidence like her suitcase

found in the locker at the L.A. Greyhound station, and owned the story.

One of the first at the murder scene was feisty and fearless reporter Agnes Underwood, who became news editor, one of the first women in the country to hold a city editorship on a major metropolitan daily. She worked as a reporter for the Los Angeles Record from 1928 to 1935, the Herald-Express from 1935 to 1962, and the Herald-Examiner from 1962 to 1968. In 1962, the L.A. Examiner and the L.A. Herald Express merged to become the Herald Examiner, with both morning and afternoon editions.

In 1968, Herald employees began a strike that lasted almost 10 years and resulted in at least \$15 million in losses. At the time of the labor strike, the paper's circulation was about 721,000 daily and had close to 2,000 employees. The strike ended in March 1977, with circulation having dropped to about 350,000 and the number of employees to 700. There were numerous confrontations between pickets and strike-breakers, including violent incidents like the bashing of the copper handrails on the staircases between the newsroom and lobby. The dented remains were preserved in the renovation process, as a reminder of the paper's tumultuous history.

During the 1980s, I worked across the street at the neighboring Associated Press in the paper's annex with many Herald staffers as colleagues. It was the cocky era of Page 2 gossip columnist Mitchell Fink, restaurant critic Merrill Shindler, then copy editor Ann Herold and photographer Dean Musgrove. The digital age and color photography in newspapers were just on the horizon.



Courtesy Arizona State University



And the newspaper bars. There was Corky's, a dive across the street from the Herald, which saw its share of fist-cuffs at closing time. It was located next to the Mayan Theater on Hill Street, (which was a porno theater at the time). The Redwood Room on Second Street was the Los Angeles Times watering hole, where on any given night you could catch the smoky aroma surrounding photographer Mike Meadows, after a day of covering local fires. The story goes that the director of photography had a booth with an extension to his office phone at the Redwood Room. People would call him and he picked up the line in the bar, with them thinking he was at his desk. Tommy was the bartender at the Red Fox in what is now South Park, which had designated tables for the Herald, AP and UPI.

I caught up with some of those seasoned former staffers, who shared their memories of the considerably alternative Herald Examiner with L.A. Weekly.

Ann Herold: After leaving the Herald, she was at the Los Angeles Times from 1983 to 2007, and was managing editor of the Times' Sunday magazine for 16 years. She then became a managing editor at Los Angeles Magazine.

"For me, the joy of working there was that building. I already had a love for unusual architectural spaces from growing up in Santa Barbara and bonding with all the great architectural spaces there, from the courthouse to Lotus Land. So, to be in a Julia Morgan building that was distinguished by its architecture was so exciting. My favorite thing to do on my breaks was to go down into the lobby and just look around, even though at that point it was a mess. It was grimy, the paint had rubbed off. What it looks like now, it did not look like then at all. But there was enough left even in its crumbling state that you could sort of see the beautiful architectural detail.

"The working conditions themselves in the upper floor where the newsroom



was were grim. The linoleum was peeling. I was cautious to sit on the chairs because I was afraid they were going to collapse. It was hard to find one where the spring wasn't popping up through the cushion.

"Still, it was really fun to work in that space. It was exciting and inspiring, working for Mary Anne Dolan. She was the first woman editor of a major American newspaper, and came from the Washington Post, so she had this incredible east coast journalism credibility and she was married to maverick TV exec Brandon Stoddard. It was such a great building, and to see it again all these years later in such an exciting state of beauty, is just glorious. You always fear those historic spaces are going to be lost when they are allowed to languish the way they were at the time that I worked there; you worry it's going to reach the point of no return. I never expected it to be restored to that extent."

Mitchell Fink: Started his journalism career at the Herald Examiner in music in 1978, later became the paper's Page 2 gossip columnist and went on to create the Insider Column at People Magazine. A successful TV career followed that, with stints on CNN's Showbiz Today and Access Hollywood.

"I started at the Herald in April of 1978. I made myself so visible. Every time they needed somebody to interview someone or review a show, I did it. And each time I'd get \$35 for this and \$50 for that. A little time went by and we started the sound section under the editorship of Jim Bellows. No story about the Herald Examiner can be written without the mention of Bellows. They pretty much brought him on to

help save the paper. There was no editor like him. He wrote a book called 'The Last Editor.' When he was at the Herald, he invented writers like Tom Wolfe and Jimmy Breslin, and went on later to develop Entertainment Tonight.

"The music business was exploding, with billboards on Sunset Boulevard in 1978 plastered with the Bee Gees and other acts. I was a music guy and I was exploding with it, interviewing rock stars. The Who, The Beach Boys, it was endless. I'd go on the road with Crosby, Stills and Nash.

"I remember one experience I had with The Who and Ken Tucker, who was reviewing them in San Diego. I waited around because I had to interview Pete Townsend after the gig. We waited about two hours and Townsend finally agreed to see me. He wouldn't allow me to take a notebook in, I had no tape recorder. I went into the interview with nothing. So I'm sitting in the men's bathroom on the floor in a dry shower with Pete Townsend. His hand is bleeding from killing his guitar. He's telling me how he can't take this anymore and he's ready to pack it in, which of course he never did. I had an incredible story, and I remembered some of the things he said and I was able to paint a picture of what it was like to be on a cold tile floor with Pete Townsend.

"We got back to the car with photographer Chris Gulker and the car blew up. We had no way to get back. We needed to wait for rental places to open. During this time of waiting in the middle of the night, Gulker tells us, 'You know, this wouldn't happen to us if we were at the L.A. Times. They provide cars.' We finally get back after no sleep at all and I



have to write a story on the Who, Tucker's got to do his review of the group and Gulker has to process his film on bloody stumps. Bellow's door was open and I went in. I told him about that extraordinary night and complained that the L.A. Times supplies cars. He looks at me and says, 'Well, you will never, ever have as much fun over there as you have here.' And that was the truth."

Merrill Shindler: Radio host and roving restaurant critic for the Southern California News Group that includes The L.A. Daily News, San Gabriel Valley Tribune and Torrance Daily Breeze

"I came down from San Francisco after working at Rolling Stone and the alternative Bay Guardian looking for a job, and went down to the legendary, great Herald building filled with wonders downstairs. Upstairs it just looked like a newsroom - a newsroom that looked like nobody had cleaned it in a long time, that is. I spoke to the editor, Jim Bellows, and next thing I knew, I was the restaurant critic for the Herald Examiner, where I worked from 1979 to 1989, when they pulled the plug.

"It was such great fun being there. I know it's a cliché, but the inmates really were running the asylum. I'd pick up buckets of mail and spend a whole day opening up press releases. Nobody ever told me where to go or what to do or write. It was zany and sort of like, if you don't bother us, we won't bother you. I was happy to be there because the Times was so stodgy, and stiff and serious. I used to say the L.A. Times is the newspaper that wishes it wasn't in Los Angeles. It doesn't like Los Angeles and the Herald Examiner is all about Los Angeles. It was gritty and funky,

and weird and largely out of control. You never knew on any given day what would happen.

"It never paid very well, but I didn't care. I was writing for Casey Kasem's Top 40 radio program and the film critic for Los Angeles magazine at the time. But getting to go to restaurants around town was great. Unlike the L.A. Times, I didn't stick with the nicer places. This is a city of grit and eccentricity, and I'd venture out to the San Gabriel Valley and the further ends of the San Fernando Valley, and find worlds like Cambodia town in Long Beach and the Vietnamese communities few knew about and the rise of a new Chinatown. I think I was the first person to write about the first Chinese seafood restaurant popping up in Monterey Park. They were like, 'You're a grownup, go write about something and try to spell words right and try to get the address right.' I rarely got a call from anyone complaining about my copy, which made me suspect that nobody was actually reading it. It was a seat-of-the-pants publication and it was great."

Dean Musgrove: Herald Examiner photographer, currently Visuals Editor at the Southern California News Group

"When I started in May of 1978, the average staff size was about 13 staff photographers, and the L.A. Times in those days probably had about 25, plus a bunch of photo editors. We all pretty much covered the same things. I'd have assignments in Tijuana or would have to drive to Sacramento for an assignment. We were mostly L.A.-based, because there were so many other community papers at that time. We left those local stories to them.

Herald Examiner battered-bannister



Photo by Michele Stueven

Los Angeles Herald Examiner



Photo by Michele Stueven

Inside the Herald-Examiner ASU campus

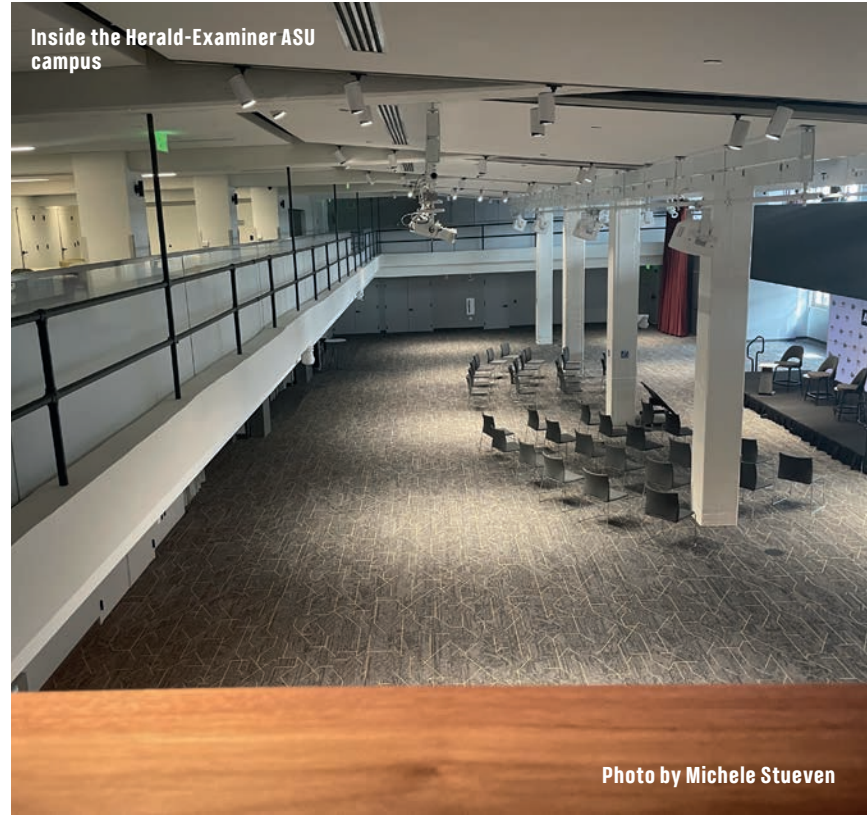


Photo by Michele Stueven


“In the photo lab, before things went digital and they had barely gone digital when the paper closed, digital cameras weren’t in there yet, we were still making prints in the big darkroom and had to turn on the water to rinse the prints. Well, the plumbing and the pipes were so bad that the water ran 24/7. The walls were thick concrete and to send a plumber in to do a job was impossible.

“Everybody was going to color in the ‘80s. The Daily News invested about \$60 million and the Times invested heavily into their color capability, and the Orange County Register was ahead of everybody. They won a Pulitzer for their Olympic coverage, largely because it was all in color. It’s 1984 and here we are doing a little spot color or farming it out to be printed elsewhere. The Herald had nowhere to go to invest in what was needed downtown to build new presses. You can’t shut down the presses to install new ones. That was kind of the beginning of the end. They couldn’t get the revenue to justify the expense of capital improvements. They put us up for sale, but nobody was buying it. Even the union was trying to get a group of investors to buy it. Slowly you started seeing more people leaving.

“I was always at the paper at 7 o’clock in the morning. I remember standing at the window with my cup of coffee looking down on the parking lot and I saw a white limo pull into the driveway. You didn’t see a lot of shiny white limos pull-

ing into the parking lot at 7 a.m., 1989. I recognized one of the heads of Hearst in New York getting out of the car. I called somebody I knew at the daily news and the LA Times and told them I think something was going to happen that day.

“Then at 9 a.m., the head of Hearst Newspapers, Robert Danzig, came in and stood on the desk in the newsroom and announced the closure. People were crying and hugging, trying to get a hold of their spouses and families. It was incredibly chaotic and emotional. But we’re still reporters and photographers, so everybody is in a frenzy writing their farewell columns. We ran out and got this huge A-frame ladder and had everyone come out to the front of the building for a ‘So Long, L.A.’ picture that would be the Page One art for the next day’s final edition. We had to take the ladder out onto Broadway and I’m in the middle of the street waving the buses past so we could take the picture. Then later on in the day, one of the editors said we’re missing a bunch of people and have to redo the picture. So we went and did the whole thing all over again, with me waving the traffic all over the place.

“But that was just an example of what I loved the most about the Herald. That team spirit of welcomed brainstorming from all departments and staff levels, and that ‘we can do it against all odds’ attitude.” 

MUSIC

GETTING LASHED

L.A. Nightclub The Lash Closes After A Decade

BY BRETT CALLWOOD



Noctis Party.
Photo by Michael Paul David

When concept club and venue *The Lash* announced that it was closing at the turn of the year, hearts could practically be heard breaking all over L.A. For a decade, *The Lash* was a welcome space for all manner of dark angels, glorious weirdos and subculture heroes located in darkest, beautiful Downtown L.A. and, now that it's gone, there's a tangible hole in the city.

"We want to thank all the talented artists, DJs, promoters, hosts, staff and customers that have supported *The Lash* for the past 10 years," they posted on social media. "The memories, experiences, shows, parties and & *YOU* made this lil DTLA club an iconic un-

derground destination. We close our doors with a cheer, a toast, & a kiss."

Loyal regulars replying on Facebook all agree that there was simply nowhere quite like *The Lash* – an alternative to the regular downtown clubs where anyone was welcome.

"The genesis of it was, Erik Hart, my good friend and the designer of the place, in February 2013, we were looking at spots with no real intention of what we thought it would become," says owner Ross O'Carroll. "It kinda just became what it became. Basically, we were looking at a space that would be a small bar, and that's what the front room of *The Lash* was. I think our intention was to create a space that we would like to go to. Some space that's

exciting and had our sensibilities. After some time, there was an option to take a bigger room in the back. So we had the front and back room, and that's what it became. That's where the club element that it evolved into came in. Our sensibilities would just be sort of an art space where people could collaborate and come together, but then with Erik's aesthetics of industrial, concrete, Berlin-esque, subway tile – that lended itself to the grittiness."

The Lash operated on themes of interaction, engagement, voyeurism, exhibitionism, reflection, and losing oneself. That might sound like standard fare for alternative nightlife venue, but it was the eclecticism of *The Lash*'s clientele that made it stand out.

"The first year was a little bit tenuous, but into year two was when we hit our stride," says O'Carroll. "Our formative years, the first four or five, were great for us. We found our rhythm as far as us not doing a typical club thing where we just do top 40. We were striving for a different vibe than what most of Downtown LA had to offer. We took a lot of chances. KB [Kristal Barboza, booker] can attest to that. We'd rather do a Vogue contest on a Saturday night than do a top 40 night. Just something more interesting than any other place, where it's just another night."

Barboza started booking at *The Lash* in 2017, and her duties included booking the parties, DJs and curating the live acts.

"One thing I'm really proud of with *The Lash* is a lot of DJs and parties started at *The Lash*," she says. "If you woke up and all of a sudden wanted to be a DJ, you could hit up *The Lash* and *The Lash* would give you a chance. There were parties that outgrew us, like *Brownies* and *Lemonade*. Now they're huge. There were a lot of parties that started at *The Lash*, then they'd go to the Regent and then move on. That's one thing of note, that a lot of people that went into DJing outgrew us."

While *The Lash*'s space wasn't really conducive for full bands with a full backline, EBM and synth/electronic acts thrived there. The likes of *Light Asylum* and *Drab Majesty* played memorable sets, as did pop powerhouse *Robyn*.

"*Pictureplane* was one of my favorite shows there," says Barboza. Our whole thing was, we wouldn't book someone in the top 40 essence. It would be someone up-and-coming. In a sense, we were an underground starting point. I'm proud of that. Like, a launch to the next thing. Halloween and New Year's live shows were really special."

O'Carroll says that of the many nights that *The Lash* hosted, *Mustache Mondays* will stick in his memories for a long time.

"They were pretty legendary in the L.A. subculture and queer culture here," he says. "They were fantastic, and we were lucky to have them when we did. They moved around to a lot of venues, but for a time, they were with us and a lot of those times were super special. The patrons that came made it very interesting, and for a Monday night when most clubs are dark, they brought amazing things. Nacho [Ignacio Nava Jr.] was the promoter and unfortunately he passed away a couple of years ago. But people that know his name know he is a big part of L.A. nightlife."

So why has *The Lash* closed? Unsurprisingly, the pandemic and lockdowns



Plackblague performing in 2017
Photo by CubicleRecords

coming out of that, everything was a bit more expensive. It was hard. Without putting a crazy amount of costs on the customer, for me personally, I thought it was time to get out. We had a good 10 years and a good tenure.”

O’Carroll will remain in the hospitality industry, and he has his own band called Dragtalk (dragtalk.bandcamp.com) to concentrate on. Barboza wants to take a break, and then she’ll be involved in local nightlife in one way or another. Neither are closing the door on the idea of a Lash revival in some form, at some point. But for now, they have their memories.

“One thing about The Lash that made it so special was how inclusive and eclectic it was,” says Barboza. “Just offering a spectrum of music and subcultures where many people would come together and have a shared experience and artistic expression without feeling weird, and just be themselves. It makes it an iconic place. L.A. nightlife will have a hole now. I can’t think of another venue aesthetically close to what The Lash was.”

“We always took a chance,” says O’Carroll in conclusion. “Whether it was a furry night or a ‘70s Japanese disco pop night, or a nu-metal night. Fuck it, it sounds fun, let’s do it. Whether that was good or bad business, it is what it



Daddy Issues Party
Photo by Davide Laffe



played a significant part.

“It was a tough decision for me,” O’Carroll says. “I didn’t want to do that to all the staff and all the promoters and everybody we worked with, but business-wise, we were still recovering from the pandemic. We were able to get some grants and stuff like that, but then

is. No other place could you run into a furry night, while there’s an Italo disco night playing in the other room. For the pedestrian to stumble on something like that, that’s what got me off. Just random people would have so much fun without knowing why.”

RIP, The Lash. For now, at least. 📺

ENTERTAINMENT / LINA IN L.A.

GOING OUT IN 2023

Yaamava Gambles on Musical Makeover

BY LINA LECARO



New year, new nightlife series! We've been covering clubs, concerts and parties for LA Weekly for decades and especially after the pandemic, we feel passionate about their survival. Many of our favorite venues have struggled and some have shuttered (*The Lash* and *Market Tavern*, which hosted dance clubs and all-star jams respectively, are just the latest to close this month). But in the past couple of years, new locales have defiantly emerged during the uncertainty of the pandemic, determined to bring people together and succeed. The industry is bouncing back and after two years of hermitting at home, we're all ready for something new, aren't we? This year, we'll be celebrating club culture like we used to, with focused reports spotlighting event spaces you can and should visit. For January, we begin with a real jackpot spot...

Historically, Indian Casinos haven't always prioritized entertainment, but *Yaamava Resort & Casino* in Highland, California, is changing that in a major way. The locale formerly known as San Manuel, was re-named Yaamava in 2020, and after a \$760-million expansion, it's got the makings of a real Vegas alternative, especially for Angelenos. Only about an hour from Downtown L.A., the resort now boasts over 7,100 slot machines (the most on the West Coast), five unique and

differentiated high-limit rooms, over 150 table games with limits of \$100,000, a luxury hotel experience, a world-class spa, and most notably for music fans, a 3,000-capacity theater for concerts (inaugurated by L.A.'s own Red Hot Chili Peppers when it opened in April 2021).

From ticket purchasing to parking, seeing a show at the Yaamava theater feels effortless and exclusive. After catching The Black Keys back in October, we're ranking it right next to L.A.'s best music venues, competitive with bigger spaces such as the YouTube theater and more intimate ones like The Fonda. Nice sightlines from every seat and sound via L-Acoustics (a French manufacturer of loudspeakers and amplifiers) provide a setting that lets performers shine.

"It's an opportunity to experience large-scale national touring acts in an intimate setting," says Drew Dixon, Yaamava's vice president of entertainment and events. "Our venue has a general admission capacity of 3,000 and can scale down to 2,570 for shows with reserved seating. Our retractable seating platforms accommodate tiered seating areas with the adaptability of a flat floor to allow for a variety of events."

It's absolutely worth the drive to see your favorite acts here. Part of the Inland Empire nestled next to the San

Bernardino mountains, Highland might seem a world away, but getting there doesn't require the time, headache or gas that most desert destinations do. It's even closer than Morongo, the Palm Springs-adjacent Indian casino once known for its music bookings, now mostly for killer Coachella parties and frequent TV commercials touting it as a hotspot.

Owned and operated by the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, of the indigenous Serrano tribe, Yaamava (which means "Spring," in tribal language) might not be as zealous about advertising as Morongo, but its bookings are attracting bigger and younger crowds. Thanks to the musical elements, this ain't your grandma's getaway.

The rebrand, which took place during the height of COVID-19, included over 5,000 new employee hires. Everyone seems really happy to be there. Part of the enthusiasm comes from the hospitality sector's excitement to be back and serving the public again, and hopefully this energy will last. Pregaming options are plentiful, with restaurants including Pine Steakhouse, Hung Bao Chinese kitchen, and an obligatory casino buffet. There's also poolside cocktail lounging and, of course, gambling galore to do before and after shows, which makes it feel more like a getaway

than an average concert night.

"The tribe's goal was to have a best-in-class casino and resort experience. To be the best, you must offer guests unparalleled products and services," adds Peter Arceo, Yaamava's Resort & Casino's general manager. "The expansion challenged our team to go beyond our competitive set and casino category to offer an experience that would expand our guest reach beyond California and become an international destination."

Backdropped by vibrant video walls, the theater's 3,800-square-foot stage has seen popular touring acts courtesy of Live Nation. The night we saw the Keys, these giant screens backlit the band in a groovy way we haven't seen at local venues. Rather than illuminating imagery from above, the screens were placed behind the band creating a video-style visual that gave their set a psychedelic feel, with geometric patterns and colors contrasting behind each musician. Complemented by acoustics that sounded crisp and clear even when things got a bit clamorous, the visual elements elevated the experience.

After shows, guests are often invited to continue the night at the resort's pool area for an after-party. There's atmospherically lit decor, DJs and themed drinks. Our favorite on the menu, and the fa-

vorite of the Black Keys singer's Dan Auerbach, as he shouted about it from the stage, is called the "Purple Rain" (made with vodka, lemonade, blue curaçao and grenadine). The pool bar closes based on weather conditions, so call ahead to see if it's open during Winter season shows.

In addition to the theater, the resort also houses a Rock & Brews restaurant with its own banner bookings. The chain founded by Paul Stanley and Gene Simmons, has locations in Buena Park and Redondo Beach, and brings to mind the Hard Rock cafe with memorabilia-heavy surroundings. As we saw with the Hard Rock in Vegas, this works in a casino environment. In 2022, the restaurant launched its "Rock & Brews Concert Series" featuring familiar nostalgia acts including Everclear, Alien Ant Farm, LA Guns and Steel Panther. Dixon says for 2023, they've confirmed "the best rock music spanning multiple generations," like late '90s hit-makers Lit, Filter, Crazytown and Adema. The musical *Rock of Ages* also starts there on Jan. 27.

Our favorite spot in the casino is just outside of Brews, where music from the eatery bleeds into the computerized bleeps and bells of the slots, and black-and-white rock photography contrasts with the flashing lights and spinning wheels on the floor. It's the perfect place to play - and hopefully score a payout - before a music or comedy show.

Patrons from Los Angeles make up a large portion of the crowds here, most driving to shows and back home afterward, but we recommend turning the trip into a staycation. From the Peppers to P!nk, Tim McGraw to Kevin Hart, Alanis Morissette to Duran Duran, the digital marquee inside the casino has seen an array of pop, rock, Latin and comedy talents, and more are on the way. "We select iconic artists that appeal to a broad range of people, from young adults to experienced concertgoers with the common desire of having a great time and enjoying great music in an intimate setting," touts Dixon. "It's a one-stop entertainment destination unlike anything you can experience in California."

Look for Yaamava to live up to its name and bloom big as Spring approaches. After January dates with REO Speedwagon and Leslie Jones, February brings Santana, Tower of Power and The Offspring. March offers Jim Gaffigan, George Thorogood and Dane Cook, followed by Joan Jett, Nikki Glaser and The Goo Goo Dolls in later months. The Bacon Brothers just announced a special Sunset Sessions set poolside in May.

Yaamava Resort and Yaamava Theater, 777 San Manuel Blvd, Highland. More info on hotel rooms, spa appointments and show tickets at <https://yaamava.com>. [A]

CANNABIS

COLOMBIA NOW COVERS MEDICAL CANNABIS REGIMES

We chatted with The Clever Leaves team to hear the impact on one of the fastest-growing cannabis markets in the western hemisphere

BY JIMI DEVINE



Colombia's state-funded health insurance now covers medical cannabis.

Those already operating in the country are obviously hyped as they prepare to meet the uptick in demand. Clever Leaves is one of the best positioned to take advantage of that expected surge. Clever Leaves was founded in 2016 by Andres Fajardo, a longtime business partner, and The Former Drug Policy director of Colombia. Think more of someone that ran the Office of National Drug Control Policy

that falls under the executive branch as opposed to the head of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

"We saw an opportunity because the legislation was changing early on and we thought Colombia has what it takes to win in the global cannabis market, given its cost structure and agricultural conditions," Fajardo told L.A. Weekly from Colombia.

Fajardo and his partners were also excited to have a hands-on way to help further influence the regulations that would be coming down the pipeline and

take part in an essential step for the nation's cannabis history.

While things are happening fast, a lot of that history has long been attached to epic land-race genetics that made their way to the coastal Santa Marta region nearly 1,000 kilometers north of the capital Bogota. The most famous being the Colombian Gold that lived to its name because if the packs made it to the other side of the Caribbean, someone was getting rich.

While the laws changing in the late 2010s was certainly a factor, the core of the policy that allowed for medical cannabis in Colombia was a law from 1986.

"The law passed but the decree and the more granular pieces of legislation were not there. But they passed some, some of that in late 2015," Fajardo explained. "The opportunity opened, we got a license, but then, during 2016 and

Sure, they're still growing the materials for extract, they've been exporting it for a few years already. Now it's about prepping the next big export, smokable flower. Everything Clever Leaves needs to export flowers has already been enacted over the last two years; it expects to start exports in the first quarter of 2023.

The biggest markets off the bat for Clever Leaves are expected to be Germany and Australia.

Fajardo says a lot of the company's growing pains were experienced in their Portuguese facility back in the day. That is where they learned the important lessons about growing smokable flowers compared to bulk extract biomass, and not the terp-heavy kind stuffed in freezers in California.

Another thing playing into their favor is, they'll be able to grow a lot of different cannabis across their cultivation portfolio cheaply in hopes of having something that speaks to everyone.

"The cost of the Colombian capacity that we have allows us to launch more and more strains more easily than in other countries," Fajardo said. "So we expect to be expanding our flower portfolio very significantly during 2023 and the years thereafter."

Fajardo says Colombia's natural light cycle and weather will play a big factor in that. The days are basically 12 hours of sunlight and darkness each, year-round, and then they just have to adapt for the drier and wetter seasons, which Colombian agriculture is long accustomed to doing.

Fajardo went on to explain what Colombian patients have had to deal with over the last few years, prior to the federal insurance plan. He believes access has been very difficult for patients, particularly in a country like Colombia, where there is universal health coverage. The further normalization of the industry is now allowing the industry to build up to meet demand.

But what makes being a medical cannabis company in a universal health care environment tricky?

"Colombian people are not used to spending out of pocket at all because everything is paid. So when you ask them to pay \$6, they are OK. But if you ask them to pay 20, 30, 40 bucks, people will just not do it," Fajardo said. "Now the question is, is the medicine going to be available and affordable? Now with this change, the market expands abruptly because it's 50 million people, all of us insured. So that poses a very attractive possibility."

We should have an idea over the next few months of the level of demand they can expect in the Colombian medical market. ☐

ART

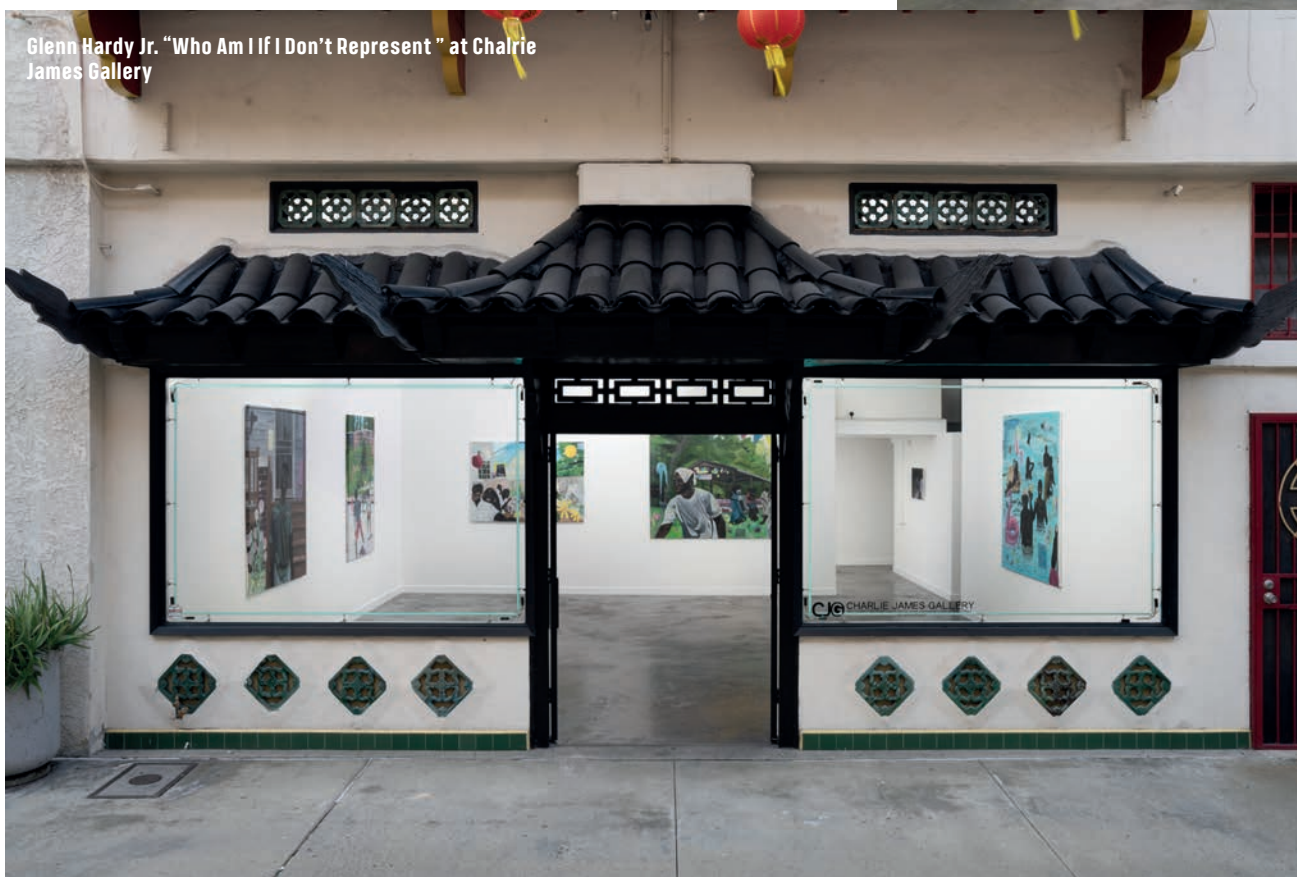
GLENN HARDY, JR. REPRESENTS AT CHARLIE JAMES GALLERY

BY SHANA NYS DAMBROT

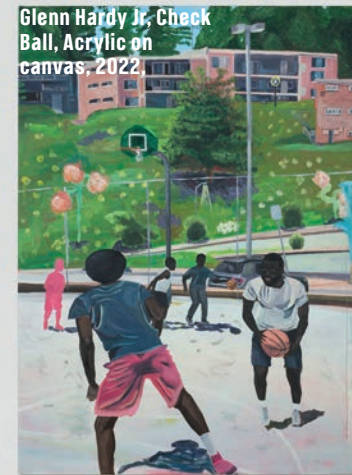


COURTESY OF CHARLIE JAMES GALLERY

Glenn Hardy Jr. "Who Am I If I Don't Represent" at Charlie James Gallery



Glenn Hardy Jr. Check Ball, Acrylic on canvas, 2022



Family reunions, birthday parties, pickup basketball games, chess matches, pool parties. The scenes and people portrayed in Glenn Hardy, Jr.'s paintings represent the joys of ordinary American life — Black life — which in itself is an intention with extraordinary meaning. A self-taught emerging artist with instant appeal, Hardy's style is a florid tempest of dashing color, vivid patterns, gestural brushstrokes, shifting scale, forced perspective, broad smiles, and

character-driven portraiture. He describes his influences as including Kerry James Marshall and Norman Rockwell — two artists who each in their way, with very different aesthetics and divergent motivations, sought to elevate the sparkling quirks and underlying tensions of quotidian culture in "the real America."

But to that roster, one could add the art historical legacy of the Impressionists, who sought out unremarkable subjects like still lifes and tea parties, the

better to highlight the radical technique of their modern vision. In *Who Am I If I Don't Represent?*, Hardy processes the parallel vectors of style and substance with a natural flair — resulting in works that are disarming in their suburban pastoral charm, lively and engaging in their thickly painted displays of beauty and ease, and pointedly critical of the lack of such medicine in the pervasive trauma-based stereotypes of Black men in American art and culture. In works

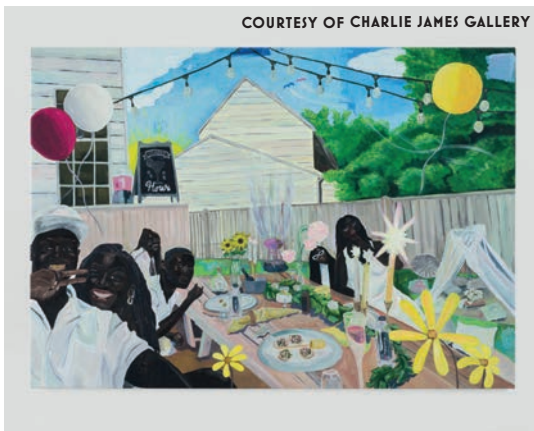
like *Happiest Hours*, a backyard barbecue is painted in a conversation with Cezanne and Monet, whose compositions also took the opportunity to dive into pattern and texture that tablecloths and lavish dinners offered, filling in a calm scene with embedded emotion, courtesy of shape and color.

In *Family Reunion* and *Check Ball*, as with other familiar scenes of boathouses, Sundays in the park, and picnics in the grass, Hardy's canvases may be welcoming, inviting and candid — but they nevertheless whisper a foundational allegation: Why must the default of ordinary life as a subject in fine art always been white life? In a climate of racism and bias, artists like Hardy counter not with testimonies of anger and violence, but with the empathetic strength that grows from tales of love. More than once, male figures are depicted, with shades of Kehinde Wiley, amid garlands



Glenn Hardy Jr.
Make Your Next
Move Your Best
Move, 2022

COURTESY OF CHARLIE JAMES GALLERY



COURTESY OF CHARLIE JAMES GALLERY

Glenn Hardy Jr., *appiest Hours*, Acrylic, graphite and oil
pastel on canvas, 2022

and flowers; or with cupcakes, cheese boards, and streamers, acknowledging milestones and celebrations with the vibe of a family album but the firmness of a stake being claimed.

In *Cutting the Net*, a student-athlete is seen at the top of a ladder that is surely both a literal element of narrative and

an assertive metaphor for the boy's life. As the title implies, he's performing a ritual of victory — it's the prerogative of the winning team to take down the net as a further trophy. Confetti swirls; he's focused on the task. The generic ubiquitous orange-sided folding ladder is rendered in fine detail, but instead of its warning label, the painting rewards the curious with this message in its place: "The mastery of anything lies not in the product, but the pursuit; the product is simply the manifestation of a practice. —KJM." The message is not obscure, but

it's a terrific reminder that developing one's craft and telling one's story not only can, but should exist side by side. The paintings are compelling for the viewer; making them is a win for the artist.

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