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MAY 26 - JUNE 1, 2023 / VOL. 45 / NO. 29
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DEPUTIES BEING QUESTIONED ON ALLEGED INTERNAL GANGS

After years of accusations that deputy gangs exist within the L.A. Sheriff's Department, the Inspector General called on deputies to answer questions about tattoos connected to these suspected gangs

BY ISAI ROCHA



COURTESY OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL



The Los Angeles County Office of the Inspector General (OIG) asked at least 35 sheriff's deputies to appear for interviews about alleged internal gangs.

In a May 12 letter to deputies, the OIG said it sought information about any possible internal gang membership or gang tattoos.

The OIG said it asked the sheriff's department for a list of members within these alleged gangs to no avail and now is seeking help from deputies to gather evidence.

"Your cooperation is being sought because we believe you may have informa-

tion regarding one of two groups that may be law enforcement gangs, commonly referred to as the Banditos and the Executioners," the letter to deputies said. "The Sheriff's Department is in possession of evidence that the Banditos and Executioners are exclusive, secretive, and may qualify as law enforcement gangs..."

Among the questions the office plans to ask deputies are "Do you have a tattoo related to the Banditos or Executioners anywhere on your body?" Additionally, they would ask where they got the tattoos, who was with them when getting them, who knows about the tattoos and

who else might be in the alleged groups.

In 2022, Inspector General Max Huntsman alleged that at least 40 deputies had been linked to internal gangs, such as the "Banditos" and "Executioners." Then-Sheriff Alex Villanueva said Huntsman had no evidence of deputy gang activity and said he had an "unhealthy obsession with attacking the department."

In February, newly voted Sheriff Robert Luna formed an internal department to "eradicate" alleged deputy gangs, working with not only the OIG, but the L.A. County Civilian Oversight Commission (COC) on the new department.

The department was called the Office

by the Association for Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs (ALADS) that represents more than 9,000 deputies, calling the measure unnecessary. In its rebuke of the recommendation, ALADS called the measure unnecessary as "gangs" were associated with former Sheriff Villanueva.

Upon hearing that he was mentioned by ALADS, Villanueva called their claims "unbelievable" through his Twitter account and accused ALADS of working for "their own profit." Former Sheriff Villanueva then called ALADS "vendidos," a Spanish term which roughly translates to "sellouts."

The OIG letter did not disclose specific disciplinary measures for failure to appear for the interviews, but it said they would be scheduled as "official work functions" and lack of cooperation could be seen as "grounds for desertification."

L.A. PRIDE DROPS OUT OF DODGERS LGBTQ+ NIGHT

The L.A. Pride organization announced it would no longer partake in the Dodgers LGBTQ+ celebration after the team's decision to exclude the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence.

Pride had partnered with the Dodgers for 10 seasons, helping put together the stadium event that typically included special guests from the LGBTQ+ community.

Pride said it was supporting the Sisters, who were scheduled to receive an award from the Dodgers as part of their Pride Night.

"As a longstanding partner of the Los Angeles Dodgers, we are very disappointed in their decision to rescind their invitation to the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence to be honored at the 10th annual LGBTQ+ Pride Night," Pride said in a May 18 statement. "As a result and in solidarity with our community, LA Pride will not be participating in this year's Dodgers Pride Night event."

The Dodgers said its decision to exclude the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence was due to "controversy" around the drag organization, as religious groups and Florida Senator Marco Rubio spoke out against their inclusion in the Dodgers celebration.

The Sisters responded by saying they were "disappointed" in the Dodgers decision and called their opposition "unfamiliar with our work."

"We wish to point out that though our LGBTQIA community is currently being assailed by a small group of extremists attempting to roll back society's progress, they are a tiny minority and do not represent the majority of Americans' commitment to a country that lives side by side in our great melting pot," the Sisters said in a May 17 statement. "Our work speaks for us. We do not serve to

of Constitutional Policing and while Luna said he had no information on any of his deputies being in gangs, the public perception was hurtful and "until we prove otherwise, the problem exists."

In March, the COC presented a report to the L.A. County Board of Supervisors with "27 recommendations to eradicate deputy gangs," which was unanimously passed, as the alleged gangs have been an issue that current board members stressed throughout the tenure of former Sheriff Villanueva.

One of the 27 recommendations was to "rotate" deputies to different parts of the county, which was reportedly disputed

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receive awards or accolades.”

The Dodgers LGBTQ+ Pride Night is scheduled for June 16.

SAG-AFTRA MEMBERS TO VOTE ON STRIKE AUTHORIZATION

The Screen Actors Guild – American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA) has asked its members to vote on a strike authorization on the heels of negotiations with entertainment studios.

SAG-AFTRA will begin negotiations with The Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP) on June 7, calling it the “most consequential bargaining sessions in history.”

“To show our resolve and to enter into negotiations from the strongest position possible, your negotiating committee and National Board unanimously join in asking you to vote YES and authorize a strike,” SAG-AFTRA said in a letter addressed to its members. “This does not mean that a strike will occur; it simply allows the National Board to call a strike if an agreement cannot be reached — and that gives the negotiating committee a strong place from which to begin talks.”

AMPTP represents several major studios that include Amazon/MGM, Apple, NBCUniversal, Disney/ABC/Fox, Netf-

lix, Paramount/CBS, Sony and Warner Brothers.

A primary focus during the bargaining will be the use of AI by these studios, a point that drove the Writers Guild of America (WGA) to strike in early May. The WGA also was negotiating with AMPTP, asking for greater job security for its writers at a time when AI use is catching fire.

Now SAG-AFTRA will attempt to secure the terms for AI use in terms of how it may affect actors.

“There has been a sea change in the entertainment industry, from the proliferation of streaming platforms to the recent explosion of generative AI, and at stake is the ability of our members to make a living,” the SAG-AFTRA letter said. “We must ensure that new developments in the entertainment industry are not used to devalue or disrespect the performers who bring productions to life.”

This is not the first time SAG-AFTRA has asked its members to vote for strike authorization prior to bargaining, doing so in 2018, before reaching contract terms two months later.

The authorization itself does not mean a strike will occur, but gives SAG-AFTRA the option, should new contract terms not be reached by June 30, when contracts end. [E]

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FOOD

TOP CHEF VOLTAGGIO BROTHERS

Going Retro In Las Vegas

BY MICHELE STUEVEN



When celebrity chef Michael Voltaggio was a kid, he was such a picky eater that his mom Sharon had to bribe him with a “Champion Eater” trophy to get him to finish his dinner. His older brother, Top Chef alumnus Bryan, was an athlete who wrangled his own trophies. Both have fond memories of getting home as the streetlights went on and sitting down to a pot roast dinner after a day of skateboarding and riding bikes.

Their new Las Vegas restaurant that has taken up a year-long residency at the Mandalay Bay resort, Retro by Voltaggio, is a culmination of those childhood memories and the brothers’ professional careers, a nostalgic nod to simpler times.

Entrance to the massive 9,000-square-foot space is at the casino level, and descends two floors down to the dining room either via a telephone booth elevator or via the staircase of the retro tower that feels like you’re walking into an ‘80s and ‘90s vintage store.

There are blockbuster videos, nintendos, bikes, skateboards, original mobile phones and boomboxes, among other antiques curated by food artist Keith

Magruder, who met the brothers when he worked for them as a dishwasher in the since shuttered Ink restaurant in L.A. Legendary skateboarder Tony Hawk signed one of Michael’s very first skateboard decks, because he wanted a place in the illuminated memory monolith.

“The whole thing stemmed from the pop-ups that we were doing at Bellagio,” says Michael, who with his older brother have been working with the MGM Resorts group for the past seven years. “We wanted that residential feel. With the food and decor, Bryan and I wanted to do something that was really personal for us that will be communicated in the experience without going over the top. We remembered how when we were kids we moved around a lot and our parents would put us in a new home and the only thing that we were able to do was put our stuff up. And that’s what we did here.”

Even more personal is the menu, which includes classics like VoltaggioO’s, a new school version of the old school canned favorite made with housemade O’s from a custom pasta dye and arrabbiata butter poured over a giant meatball. The cheese



and crackers are a soulful plate of cracklings, barbecue pork rinds, whipped brie and pimento vinaigrette. The Caesar salad comes with Parmesan churros.

The chicken and dumplings made with pillowy gnudi, crispy chicken thighs, lemon-chicken jus and snap peas as well as the Wagyu beef pot roast of two-day cooked beef cheeks, Nantes carrots and cippolini onions are ceremoniously served in traditional CorningWare casseroles. The share plates on the table, with multi-colored folded napkins you’d find in a gaudy hotel dining room, are Fortessa ceramic versions of the flimsy paper plates the brothers spend childhood years eating from at backyard barbecues.

“Those life lessons as a kid that my mom instilled in me - like bribery - were the reward,” says Michael, who with his brother Bryan started out their culinary careers as teenagers at a Maryland Holiday Inn. “I overcame my own fear of food by getting to eat some of these things like a Caesar salad or a really good pot roast. That wonderful discovery of food from the perfect bite of a little bit of potato, a small piece of carrot and beef juices started it all.

“I remember we’d go on vacation to Ocean City, Maryland to one of those all-you-can-eat seafood restaurants and thought we were so rich,” he says. “I couldn’t believe I was allowed to eat as many soft shell crabs as I wanted.

Those little moments make you reflect on what a big part of food can be in your life when you associate it with certain memories and places. We wanted to create that same environment and experience for all ages. Maybe for kids, too. We’ve had a lot of kids eating in the restaurant and they love the communal toy table that’s full of old toys, Rubik’s cubes and things that are not ipads or connected to a wire.”

Bryan (who actually preferred the Chef Boyardee ravioli) fondly remembers how those classic canned staples had a permanent place in the pantry out of necessity, convenience and budget. Active in sports, there were many a weeknight when the towheads and little sister Staci came home and popped open a can.

“When we were kids, dinner was often a fend-for-yourself type of situation,” says Michael, who together with Bryan opened STRFSH, the fast casual sandwich shop in Santa Monica that closed in 2021. “I remember taking some of those prepackaged foods that were in our pantry and turning them into other stuff. What can I do with these ramen noodles tonight to make them different from last night? Even down to the construction of a sandwich. I remember the time I discovered when making a baloney and cheese sandwich, the difference it made putting the mustard on the baloney side and the mayo on the cheese



COURTESY ANTHONY MAIR



COURTESY ANTHONY MAIR



Bryan and Michael Voltaggio

COURTESY RETRO BY VOLTAGGIO



Cheese and Crackers

COURTESY RETRO BY VOLTAGGIO



Pepperoni Rolls

COURTESY RETRO BY VOLTAGGIO

side. It all sounds like remedial culinary talk, but when we were kids and had these things in our pantry, we wanted to make something different out of them from just what the directions said. Very early on, we started to learn and create our own cooking styles, which is communicated today in the food we cook now, starting with the foundation of an idea and constructing the dish on top of that idea, as opposed to wanting to do something with ramps and hibiscus leaves. There's no foundation for that. So we start with a dish and let our imagination take over."

Perhaps one of the most imaginative dishes on the Retro menu - mischievously sparked by the brothers' obses-

sion with liquid nitrogen - is the Caprese salad, a mozzarella ovoline pretending to be a tomato served with pesto and tomato toast. The mozzarella gets semi-frozen and dipped into a tomato sauce reduction that creates a pomodoro skin.

While most of the dishes go back before the '80s and '90s, they are foods the siblings ate and later were tasked with cooking. Their first jobs were in a Holiday Inn hotel dining room, when Bryan was 17 and Michael was 15. They were responsible for creating the pasta special, vegetable of the day and soup du jour. Bryan was ice carving in the back while Michael poached whole salmon and carved palm trees out of carrots and green peppers to decorate the brunch



buffet. They started their careers back when everything was done from scratch, and went on to graduate from the best culinary schools in the country.

“I think life has become too complicated and when you have an opportunity to make people feel comfortable - inspiration without intimidation - we want to get back to the fundamentals of cooking,” says Michael. “We just want to

make really good mashed potatoes.”

“It’s a small reminder of simpler times,” Bryan chimes in. “Everything is so fast and information is so available now. We want to give our guests the opportunity to reflect back and listen to the music. The playlist is all genres and sort of like when you were tuning on the radio in your car changing stations trying to find that one song you’re going

to bob your head to. You couldn’t just go on Spotify back then and play what you wanted to hear. You were listening to top 40.”

Even if it’s at the risk of being kitschy? “If somebody calls it kitschy, that’s a huge compliment,” says Michael. “Because that’s what it is. It’s fun. We’re communicating our life experiences from then until now both personally

and professionally. Maybe nostalgia is a better word, but either way it means we did our job. It’s a bit of a risk, and it might be a little cheesy, but we’ve had so much fun doing this project. Bryan and I were in that kitchen from 8 a.m. till 3 a.m. most nights putting this menu together. We had standing time of 18 hours a day and hung out as brothers reliving so many memories.”



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DOWNTOWN VEGAS ROCKS HARDER THAN EVER

The Old Strip is Rippin' with Music Festivals, Bar Crawls and Hot Club Shows that Rival Hollywood

BY LINA LECARO



COURTESY CIRCA CASINO



COURTESY CIRCA CASINO

From EDC to Live is Beautiful, Viva Las Vegas to Sick New World, Las Vegas is becoming known for festivals nearly as much as gambling. With this weekend's Punk Rock Bowling event boasting its biggest lineup yet of hardcore favorites in Downtown Vegas, a substantial contingent of Angelenos will once again trek to Sin City for a weekend of wild times and riotous music.

L.A.'s "Big Daddy" Carlos Adley and

Ava Berman will be, as always, hosting the banner-worthy bashes, with lineups that complement and rival those on the festival stages. The pair, best known for hot spots like Velvet Margarita, Glam Slam and The Dragonfly in L.A., opened adjoining nightclubs Backstage Bar and Billiards and Fremont Country Club 12 years ago, setting out to turn what was once disparagingly referred to as "the Old Strip" into a new, world-class nightlife destination. And

they've succeeded, with bookings featuring popular touring bands weekly, and festival-adjacent parties that everyone wants to get into.

"We're making a conscious effort to bring the elements of classic Hollywood and the Sunset Strip to Downtown with music, bar crawls and entertainment in general," says Adley. "The festivals are a part of this and the two venues on our property host after-parties and events with more of these than

any music venue in Las Vegas."

Filling a void for music spaces beyond giant casinos or dive bars, Backstage and Fremont are essentially the Whisky and the Roxy of Downtown Vegas. They not only get the most popular touring artists to play both, they get them to party too, with events before and after their shows. During Punk Rock Bowling, their lineups have been the hottest tickets in town since they opened. So much so that in the last few (non-COVID) years, they realized they needed to expand during PRB. Their outdoor patio sort of became a gathering place for rockers and their friends, so Carlos and Ava decided to expand it, making use of all of their property for an outdoor carnival behind the clubs that Adley says is meant as a gift to fest-goers, especially LA people who make up a large portion of the patronage. They've made it open to those who can't get into their sold out club bashes inside, so anyone with a festival ticket gets to hang in the lively outdoor fiesta featuring DJ Lethal (House of Pain), food trucks and more.

On a much larger scale, the amusements bring to mind the pairs' pumping outdoor patio at Velvet Margarita on Cahuenga, a venue that is much-missed since it shuttered during the pandemic. Berman sees a parallel between their old venue on the popular boulevard and what they are doing now in Vegas.

"Our part in the renaissance of Downtown is a lot like what we did on Cahuenga when we bought our building there," says Berman. "We built the back patio and got people coming to the area regularly alongside the other venues there. The mayor dubbed it the 'Cahuenga Corridor' and the entertainment district of Hollywood... that's what we're doing in Downtown Las Vegas."

Along with their original partner Tony Hsieh the couple have been involved with what was first called "The Downtown Proj-

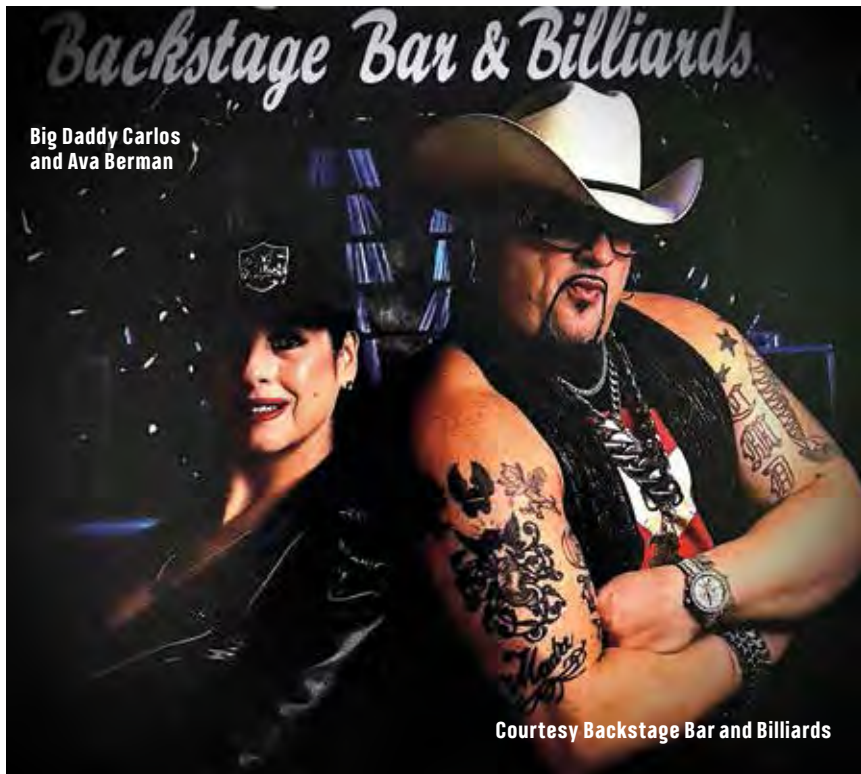


Rancid

Photo by Chip Litherland



Courtesy Punk Rock Bowling



Big Daddy Carlos and Ava Berman

Courtesy Backstage Bar and Billiards



Monique Powell of Save Ferris

Courtesy Backstage Bar and Billiards

ect” with initiatives to bring residential and commercial business to the area that first attracted visitors in Vegas’ heyday, before the massive casino procession opened up on Las Vegas Blvd.

Downtown is still in a state of change and improvement. Many visitors think of the Fremont Experience –the covered light-show walk-thru known for tourist shops, street performers and a zip-liner ride spanning a sizable portion of the walkway– but the region has a lot more to offer (see list at end of this piece). And it promises to keep growing, thanks to figures like Derek Stevens who opened slickly sophisticated new

properties such as The D and Circa hotels in the area and the Downtown Events Center, where many festivals are held.

Punk Rock Bowling was held at the Events Center too, but this year it will take over the same area as the highly successful Life Is Beautiful fest (entrance at 6th and Stewart streets), and at several clubs throughout Downtown including The Downtown Grand, The Place on 7th, The Usual Place, and The Sand Dollar Downtown, with the biggest shows featuring The Dead Boys, Save Ferris and Angelo from Fishbone’s Dr. Madd Vibe to name a few, at Backstage and Fremont. PRB is a festival

that highlights Downtown Vegas and encourages patrons to absorb their surroundings, which are clearly in a state of major growth once again, after the pandemic. Backstage Bar and Billiards and Fremont Country Club are in many ways the centerpieces of this thriving part of town.

“We are booked solid because so many bands that have never played the Vegas market are coming here now,” Adley and Berman –whose next project is a hotel in the area– tell LA Weekly. “We came down here because we saw the potential of what could be and the renaissance that is happening is actually more than we imagined.”

More Nightlife in Downtown Vegas:

Circa is the newest resort in downtown Las Vegas and it’s a must-visit, even if you’re not staying there. Vegas Vickie’s lounge, featuring the famous neon cowgirl sign (her boyfriend Vegas Vic is still lit up out on Fremont street) offers whimsical cocktails and a great old-timey ambience. The owners acquired the vintage sign in 2016 and it goes perfectly with the bar’s mid-century design and retro Vegas vibes. There’s also the Legacy Club, a rooftop drinking spot featuring signature and classic cocktails, and a rooftop locale on Circa’s 60th floor with panoramic views

of the Las Vegas skyline. Last but not least, check out Stadium Swim, Vegas’ only year-round, multi-level pool amphitheater with a high-resolution, 143-foot diagonal, 14-million-pixel screen and six temperature-controlled pools (touted cleanest in Las Vegas). (circalasvegas.com)

Golden Nugget’s Troy Liquor Bar sees a packed dance floor on weekends but many come for the view of downtown walking crowds provided by its second-floor balcony, while Ice Bar offers a cool scene overlooking the Nugget pool and epic shark tank (goldennugget.com/las-vegas/nightlife).

Inspire Nightclub offers a three-level bar, lounge and nightclub with DJs spinning dance hits ranging from hip-hop to pop. (inspirelasvegas.com), while a vampy vintage vibe awaits at Commonwealth where craft cocktails and dancing from touring DJs make for lively good times (commonwealthlv.com). Also visit Don’t Tell Mama at Neonopolis, a piano bar where the bartenders and servers take turns serenading guests between waiting on them (donttelmama.com).

For restaurants in downtown try La Comida, Le Thai, Commonwealth, Therapy, Flippin’ Good Burgers & Shakes, Bacon Nation, Banger Brewing and Evil Pizza. [L]

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MAVEN GENETICS ONE OF LA'S TOP DOGS AT EMERALD CUP

Maven Genetics finished Top Five in California's most prestigious cannabis contest

BY JIMI DEVINE



LA.'s Maven Genetics became one of the state's premier cannabis companies two weekends ago at The Emerald Cup with a top-five finish.

While Maven's rise around the state in recent years has been quick, this is the biggest accolade yet for the longtime OG cultivators (Kush and metaphorically) that transitioned to the recreational at the dawn of the legal era. Even before the big win, the company found itself in roughly 400 shops at any given time.

We sat down with Maven's cofounder and president Mike Corvington to talk about the win and their experiences transitioning to a fully vertically integrated company locally that still grows in some of its legacy gardens, distributes its own product and sells its cannabis through two storefronts on top of hits hundreds-

long client list.

"Los Angeles is a beast man," Corvington told L.A. Weekly. "From the regulatory compliance things to L.A. in general, it's good for us because it's home. This is where we're from, we're very comfortable with the situation as a whole. The industry is going through a lot of bullshit, as it has for a long time. I don't think that's just related to Los Angeles. I think that's probably California as a whole. But, you know, all in all, L.A. is our home man, our backyard. This is where we've been rocking for a long time."

Corvington isn't kidding. He admits up until a few years ago, they barely had to leave the L.A. bubble at all, as they pumped out awesome OGs for 15 years straight without a thought to creating what is now one of the widest lineups in the state. We asked Corvington if it was



fair to call most of their cultivation and wider cannabis careers L.A.-centric?

"Absolutely. Yeah. I mean, we've really started pushing up in the NorCal territories and distributing up there probably two years ago," Corvington said. "We went pretty heavy on that first group, first few years in transition from medical to rec market. We get out and just kind of grew up grassroots. Everything we've done has been grassroots where we're self-funded, we haven't taken on any capital even still, to this day. I'm not trying to push into the market more than what is being asked from us, you know, so we're just kind of doing our thing and it's been working successfully. We're still here."

But the still here part hasn't always been tricky. As for many cultivators, one of Maven's main jobs is to get the cash for the flower they pump into the marketplace. As with many of their peers on the cultivation side of things, that's often proven easier said than done.

Over the last few years Maven's been able to hone in on the problem accounts and who is actually going to pay them. Making sure the latter always has flower flowing their way is critical.

"You, unfortunately, have to weed out people that just don't handle their shit professionally," Corvington noted. "And there's a lot of people who just kind of are trapped in old ways and are having a difficult time evolving with things as they moved forward. But paying your bills is just kind of number one."

One of the things Maven has done during these times is try to be as accommodating as possible to the folks they're working with. They'd rather constantly restock you with the freshest flower possible rather than have something sit there that is going to degrade the consumer experience and the shop isn't going to be able to make the payment terms in the original time frame.

"We tell people we'll come to deliver to you every day," Corvington emphasized. "We don't want to sell you anything that even has a potential opportunity to get old. We will happily, no charge, come to drop you fresh packs all the time. So we kind of scaled-down people's orders a lot of times because sometimes these buyers don't understand their own market or demographic."

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MUSIC

A NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

Vegas' Punk Rock Museum is open for business

BY BRETT CALLWOOD



This month, the annual Punk Rock Bowling event returns to Downtown Las Vegas, with the likes of Rancid, Bad Religion, Suicidal Tendencies, the Damned, GBH, the Exploited, Fear and many more performing.

For punks who reside outside of Vegas, it's a good excuse to take a trip to "adult Disneyland." And depending on how they structure that trip, there's clearly plenty to do in the days and hours between sets. As of very recently, and appropriately enough, those activities can include a visit to the Punk Rock Museum.

After a couple of years of planning, the Punk Rock Museum finally opened its doors on April 1. There are both temporary and permanent exhibitions, and it hosted its first wedding on April 15. Two of the brains behind the institution are Lisa Brownlee, who has a background in tour/festival management, and Vinnie Fiorello, best known for co-founding ska-punks Less Than Jake.

"At a moment of not being on tour and looking for something creative, Mike (Fat Mike of NOFX and Fat Wreck Chords) had reached out and said, 'Hey,

this idea of starting a Las Vegas Punk Shop – maybe you can do some merch. 'I was like, 'OK, cool,'" Fiorello says. "A few days later, he goes, 'Hey, I was talking to Lisa Brownlee and she was thinking that the Las Vegas Punk Shop could have artifacts. So don't worry about the punk shop, we're going to do the Punk Rock Museum. Are you in? I was totally in, and that started my involvement."

This was the tail end of 2020, when it looked like we might be through the worst of the pandemic but before variants made things shitty again. So with the idea firmed up and the team in place, artifacts for display had to be collected.

"Between us all, being in the industry for as long as we have, for me in particular working as the point person at massive festivals – I did 24 years of the Vans Warped Tour – we had this really huge rolodex," Brownlee says. "This group is going to do something and get it done. It was a matter of people trust-falling on us without a proof of concept. Also, the timing was really right because we were nearing the end of a pandemic so everybody had been home for some period of time and a lot of these people started going through their own personal archives



going, 'what am I going to do with all this shit?'"

At the very beginning, they didn't know what they were looking for. None of them had ever created and/or curated a museum before. They just knew that the items had to have a good story.

"We'd have our meeting, and discuss our must-have bands," says Fiorello. "We would break and then a list would come in. We have to have the Bouncing Souls and Descendents. Black Flag. You form this list of, these are to us the most important gets that have to be in the museum. From that point, you stumble onto, 'Hey, these are the other three branches to the tree. We have to get that'"

Both have their favorite artifacts; for Brownlee, it's anything relating to the early years of British punk. Fiorella adores the Operation Ivy guitar donated by Tim Armstrong.

"To me is the start of my own journey, not necessarily my brother's journey," he says. "That was ground zero for my punk rock music, so to have that is awesome."

The parameters of what is and isn't punk has long been up for debate. When did it start, who was the first band, etc., etc.? For the most part, honestly, who gives a shit. But still, it's something that the Punk Rock Museum had to consider.

"What we are able to get is what dictates how far we go back," says Brownlee. "We did a nod to proto-punk, to the Stooges and that sort of stuff. But it's not as easy to gather those things to tell that story. For me, a band called Los Saicos from Peru is the original punk rock band and that's from the sixties. Some may argue Elvis Presley or whatever the case may be, but we intended to start this museum around '74. But because we know the story goes further back than that, we say you have to give a nod to the New York Dolls and everything that came before the Ramones and the Sex Pistols to make it authentic."

On a similar note, the same gatekeepers that will try to decide what is allowed to be called punk will aim criticism at the Punk Rock Museum, claiming that the



Circle Jerks

PHOTO BY RIKKI ERCOLI

simple existence of such an institution is anti-punk. They'll complain about the prices and the corporate nature, because that's what they do.

"Someone might say that having punk artifacts in a punk museum is anti-punk, but for me it's amplifying what punk's message was, which for me was about

diversity, welcoming everybody," says Fiorello. "That's what drew me into punk rock music to begin with – when I felt like an outsider, the other outsiders welcomed me into the fold. Any time that I can look and go, 'Hey, are we doing the right thing for the passion and the love of it, then cool. Why are we doing this? We

love punk rock music. We're passionate about it. Why not build this church and be able to show everybody the history of punk rock. Five decades worth of it. People say punk rock was rebelling, and I agree. But being able to show the roots, the tree and the leaves of punk rock music, that to me outweighs any concept of

'punk rock is meant to be anti-establishment' or whatever."

As they look to a bright future, the Punk Rock Museum is planning programmed events – perhaps Q&As followed by short performances similar to what we see at the Grammy Museum – but they don't want to become a regular ticketed concert venue.

"If somebody has a book out and they want to come talk about their book," says Brownlee. "Or a film/documentary. A Q&A. That's the thrill of it, that you never know what's going to happen. We obviously want to continue to have our permanent exhibits but this is a living museum so everything will rotate and expand. We want to expand our international section."

"For me, the hope is that you have a dad come in and his thing is the '80s or '90s," adds Fiorello in conclusion. "But they have a son or daughter that would go up to the second floor and the 2000s and go, 'Hey, look at My Chemical Romance.' That's their music, and they trade that. 'This is my punk rock, this is your punk rock.' Punk rock music is such a personal thing, and that definition is such a personal thing. I love to be able to show the depth of it. The look and sound of My Chemical Romance is different to Black Flag and the Circle Jerks, but the spirit is the same thing. I love that it all shares the same building."

Visit thepunkrockmuseum.com for more info.

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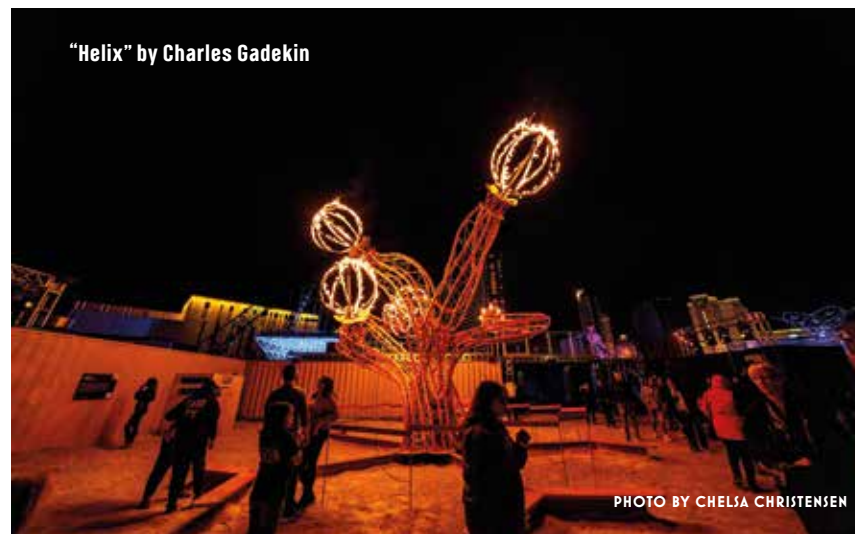
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ART

TRANSFIX LAS VEGAS: A BIGGER, BRIGHTER ART ADVENTURE

A massive nighttime light and sound sculpture park lights up Las Vegas Blvd.

BY SHANA NYS DAMBROT



Everything's bigger in Vegas—and blingier and brighter too—and this year that goes double for experiential art as TRANSFIX opens a choose-your-own-adventure concourse of more than 50 interactive light, sound, video, lasers, digital media, and occasionally fire-based sculptures and installations face to face with the Strip.

The spectacle's presence is announced by the towering, benevolent glow of artist Marco Cochrane's R-Evolution—a 45 foot tall, gently kinetic and luminous

woman staring across Las Vegas Blvd. at the Wynn and Encore properties. She is made of light but remains a monumental, statuesque presence throughout the day as well, guiding the curious toward the Resorts World Las Vegas. The Hilton folks have turned over a 200,000 square-foot (nearly five acres) parcel of land to a team of creatives with big ideas. The leadership includes architecture and events professionals with a collective background from the clubs of New York City to the burns of Black Rock City—but the brilliant family

of artists and builders is in the hundreds.

The results combine Burning Man with EDM/EDC aesthetics in an elevated production that's by turns psychedelic, ancestral, futuristic and folksy, funny and spiritual, participatory, photogenic, optimistic, analog and tech-forward, and above all full of surprises. It's no small thing to balance the hyperstimulation of Vegas-bound audiences' expectations with the meaningful and ultimately personal journey of thoughtful works of art. Perhaps the biggest surprise of all—and

the greatest testament to the talents of the entire staff and crew—is how well TRANSFIX pulls it off.

Co-founded by Michael Blatter and Tom Stinchfield, with a cohort of partners that includes architect Marc Dizon, experience producer Heather Gallagher (the executive leader of technology and design services for Burning Man for 17 years), and curator and experience designer Meranda Carter (who, fun fact, once interned at the L.A. Weekly before going on to become one the most sought-after experts in this emerging art genre), TRANSFIX exists with the goal to “foster a global creative economy, build a strong community, and support innovative artists of all backgrounds, while encouraging participation and personal creative discovery.

Stinchfield in particular likes to say that instead of a dance party with some art, it's art with a little dance party. Central to this is the inclusion of music and sound in many of the individual works, as well as a towering “stage” called Axion—a massive, temple-like scaffold of sacred geometry by light artist Christopher Bauder and composer KiNK—which in addition to its own psychedelic respite for audiences, serves as a platform for the show's occasional dance parties.

So just how did this team of Superfriends come together? Stinchfield was running marketing for a big company and his mentor introduced him to Michael Blatter. “What I didn't know is on the other side of that, she was calling Michael and saying, Hey, you need to take this guy to Burning Man, he needs to reset himself creatively,” he tells L.A. Weekly. “This is 10-11 years ago, we became fast friends—and we were both so inspired by the heart that goes into the art at Burning Man and we wanted to see a way we could support that and bring that level of experience to a wider audience—and get the artists paid for their work! TRANSFIX



"Trumpet Flowers" by Amigo and Amigo

PHOTO BY CHELSA CHRISTENSEN



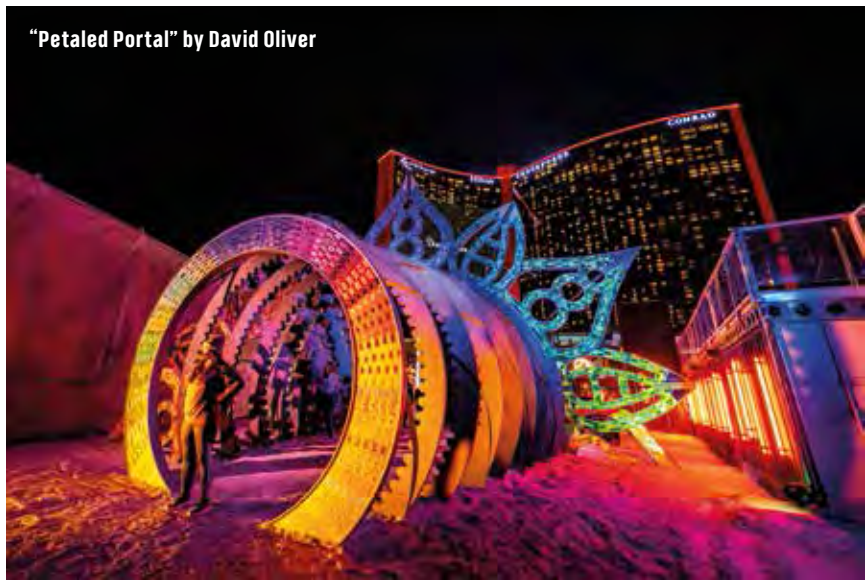
"El Pulpo Magnifico" by Duane Flatmo

PHOTO BY CHELSA CHRISTENSEN



"Paraluna" by Christopher Schardt

PHOTO BY CHELSA CHRISTENSEN

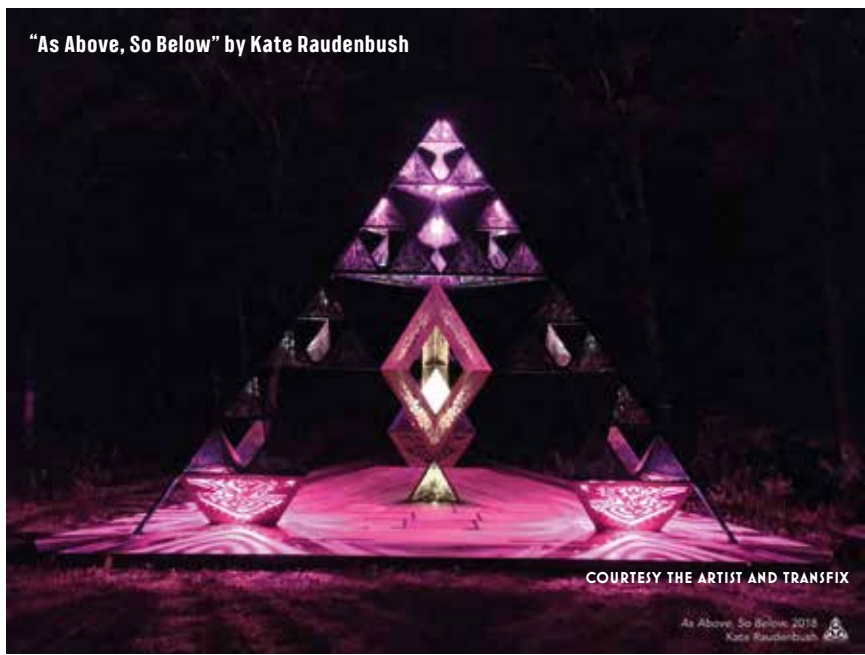


"Petaled Portal" by David Oliver



"Infinity" by Gabriel Pulecio

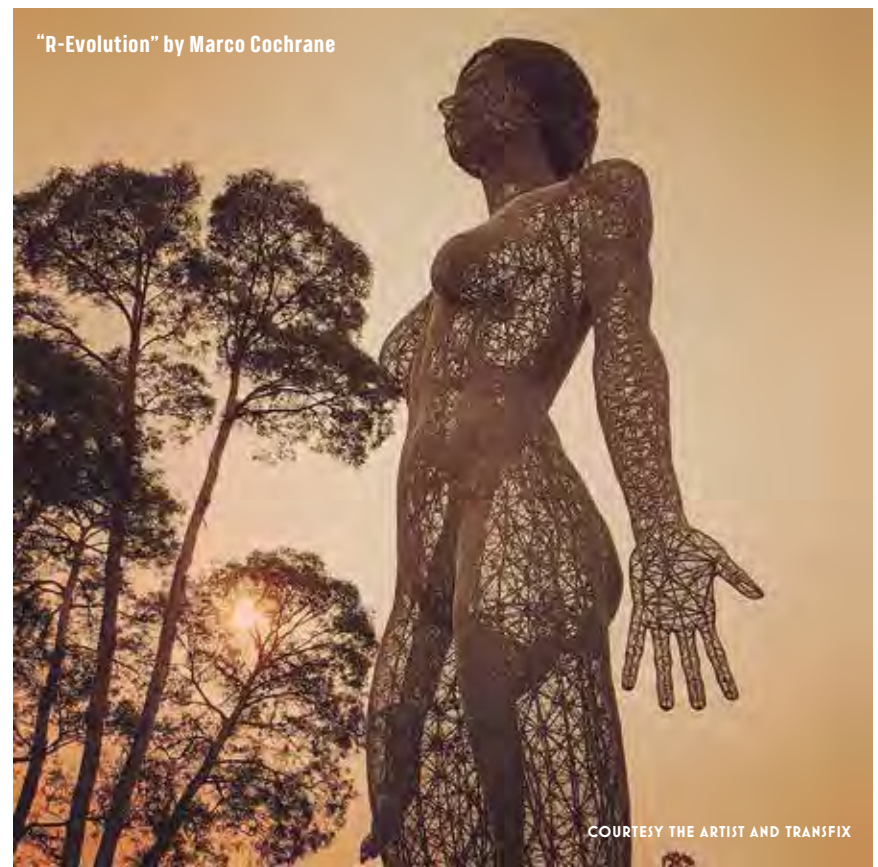
PHOTO BY CHELSA CHRISTENSEN



"As Above, So Below" by Kate Raudenbush

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND TRANSFIX

As Above, So Below, 2018
Kate Raudenbush



"R-Evolution" by Marco Cochrane

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND TRANSFIX



"R-Evolution" by Marco Cochrane

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND TRANSFIX

is not a gallery, it's not a museum—there are too many gatekeepers when it comes to how art is valued."

At the same time, they're also elevating the conceptual and innovational aspects of what "immersive" can mean. "Touch the art, climb on top of it, become part of the art! That's what immersive is, or can be," says Stinchfield. "It's just not seeing things around you. It's actually having to use your body and physically engage with a piece to actually complete it."

Examples of this interactive activation dynamic abound. For example, Todd Moyer's Fluidic, a projection-mapped video artwork in which viewers' motions churn digital lava lamps on a screen; Pablo González Vargas' 37 foot tall interactive light and sound sculpture ILUMINA, which is powered by the collective energy and flow of its participants; HYBYCOZO's delightful light-casting lanterns that love it when you spin them; and Gabriel Pulecio's Lustix which generates seductive

pattern-based illusions with light nodes and motion inside a shipping container. One piece that is not interactive is Duane Flatmo's absolutely legendary art car, El Pulpo Magnifico, whose celebrity status was cemented in The Simpsons' Burning Man episode; it spits fire and you should definitely not touch or climb it.

Christy Corda/Playmodes designed the TRANSFIX entry portal, a Tron-like illuminated tube the size of a small airplane hangar and with the energy of a space station transport (it's actually called Stellar), which all visitors must enter and pause within for a short sound, music, and light show that intentionally reorients your perception and grounds you in the new place you are about to enter. Like fresh ginger, this cognitive palette cleanser helps you shake off the casino energy just enough, and sets you up for a more pure mental flow within the experience to come.

"No one has actually done what we've done," Meranda Carter tells L.A. Weekly. "We wanted it to be a celebration of life. We've learned a lot, and we've really had

to assemble a smart and incredible team in order to get this done. Our artists coming in, trusting us for up to three years for some of their projects is remarkable. I started my time at the company by just calling every artist I could think of and just having open conversations with them about their work and where they're at in their careers. I talked to over 400 artists in the last two years! This kind of work needs to be seen by so many more people, because it's impactful and not only in scale but in their stories and approaches," she says.

"Seeing folks wander around and experience the art gave me chills," Carter says, in a sentiment echoed by every team member and artist she spoke to. "I was very excited to see that open engagement and play and curiosity, because that's what we're all about."

TRANSFIX remains installed through September, with special events planned throughout. For more information visit transfixart.com, and follow the journeys it inspires at [instagram.com/transfixart](https://www.instagram.com/transfixart). 



PHOTO BY CHELSEA CHRISTENSEN

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TECHNOLOGY Slalom's West Hollywood, CA office has multiple openings for the following positions (various types/levels): DESIGNER, SR (various types/levels) (job ID: 47666): Design or evaluate human interaction systems, using human factors engineering and ergonomic principles to optimize usability, cost, quality, safety, or performance. Must be available to work on projects at various, unanticipated sites within commuting

distance of Slalom's West Hollywood, CA office. May telecommute. Salary range \$89,648-\$135,300/yr. **TECHNOLOGY CONSULTANT, SR** (various types/levels) (job ID: 26046): Identify and develop technology solutions for clients. Must be available to work on projects at various, unanticipated sites within commuting distance of Slalom, LLC's West Hollywood, CA office. Some telecommuting is permitted. Salary range: \$147,410-\$167,475/yr. TO APPLY: Go to www.jobpostingtoday.com, search for job ID & submit resume.

Fin Risk Spc: BA in Econ/Fin/rel field. Dev/execute an effective risk mgmt prog relevant to co's ops. Salary: \$66747/yr. Work/Resume to: Bibawi Mgmt, 10811 Ashton Av #116, Los Angeles, CA 90024.

MARKETING Ctrip International Travel (U.S.) Co. Ltd has an opening in Los Angeles, CA for Head of Quality Assurance to lead the global quality team with team members in Asia, Europe, and North America. The position's wage range is \$133,416.00 to \$253,878.00 per year. Telecommuting permitted. Ref job code C#5676724 & mail resume to: Ctrip International Travel (U.S.) Co. Ltd. Attn: HR, 1150 S. Olive St, Room 09-115, Los Angeles, CA 90015.

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System Director of Infection Prevention sought by Adventist Health White Memorial in Los Angeles, CA, to be responsible for infection prevention & employee health initiatives across the health system. Provides overall direction, dvlpmnt, implmntn, & integration of the system infection prevention prgm which incl compliance w/ all the Joint Commission, Federal, State, & local reporting reqmts. Dvlps & implements strategic & operational policies & participates in strategy dvlpmnt. Provides subject matter expertise regarding all aspects of infection prevention, sterile processing, environment of care, relevant products & supplies along w/ tools/protocols that improve patient outcomes. Manages assessment & dvlpmnt of training prgms, policies & procedures & forms to address the infection prevention & employee health needs in accordance w/ guidelines established by the CDC as well as regulatory agencies. Bach's deg (or foreign equiv) in Health Administration, Nursing, or related healthcare field & 5 yrs of exp as a Nurse, Infection Prevention Decision Support Analyst, Infection Preventionist, Lead Infection Preventionist or related field. In the alternative, a Master's Deg (or foreign equiv) in Health Administration, Nursing or related healthcare field is acceptable & 3 yrs of exp as a Nurse, Infection Prevention Decision Support Analyst, Infection Preventionist, Lead Infection Preventionist or related field. BC in Infection Prevention & Control (CIC). Salary range:

\$151,320 - \$172,000. Mail resume to Todd Reese at 1720 E Cesar E Chavez Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90033.

Director of Software Systems, WattEV, Inc. Job Site: Long Beach, CA. Travel to customer/company sites required up to 30 days a year. 25% international, 75% domestic. Offered Wage: \$173k/year. Govern all IT/software-related vendors & ecosystem providers including COTS, PaaS/SaaS providers; Drive engineering efforts, implementation, & deployments; Responsible for resource management of overall IT & software-related personnel. To apply, email: hr@watttev.com

Regional Sales Manager of Mexico Division sought by G.B.T. Inc. to manage and lead regional sales staff to coordinate marketing schemes with regional distributors and monitor monthly promotions, monitor product sourcing channels, and develop sales strategies for the regional market, etc. Salary: \$65,865 per year. Resume to Job site: 17358 Railroad St., City of Industry, CA 91748, Attn: Janie Lin.

Business Software Support Specialist (Torrance, CA) sought by IT Consulting co. for providing tech'l assistance to clients on using various business software applications for their operations. BS in Comp. Info Systems or related fields. Must be fluent in the Japanese. Work at and mail resume to Beancube, Inc., at 3655 Torrance Blvd., Ste 435, Torrance, CA 90503.

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Empl'r: Rizo Lopez Foods, Inc. Job: Regional Grnl Mngrs in Gardena, CA: Responsible for overall sales, product profitability, trade support expense, growth of sale in SoCal. 10-15% Dom travel. Will supervise 25-35 employees. Min pay: \$167,211.00/year. Apply: Gtobia@rizolopez.com and ref. Job Code RGM-201.

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Farmers Group (Woodland Hills, CA) seeks Agile Dev Team Member V to provide expertise in design & functionality of business apps./automate Guidewire PolicyCenter app. using Selenium & implement DevOps/RPA & API Automation. Salary: \$147,410/yr. Remote work option. Apply at Farmers.com/Careers, Job ID: 18909

HR Coordinator: Send resume to I Can BBQ Korean BBQ, LLC., 5781 Alton Pkwy., Irvine, CA 92618. Job location is in Irvine, CA, wage ranges from 47K to 49K.

Biological Technicians/clinical research sought for our work site in Northridge, CA. Two (2) positions available. 40 hrs. weekly. \$17.00/hr. Bachelors degree req. in Chemistry or Biology, or Health Sciences or, any other closely related + 6 mos. work exp. in same job or, any other closely related. Mail Resume with cover letter via regular mail to: California Medical Research Associates, Inc. 18531 Roscoe Blvd, Suite 206, Northridge, CA 91324. Attn: P.K.

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