

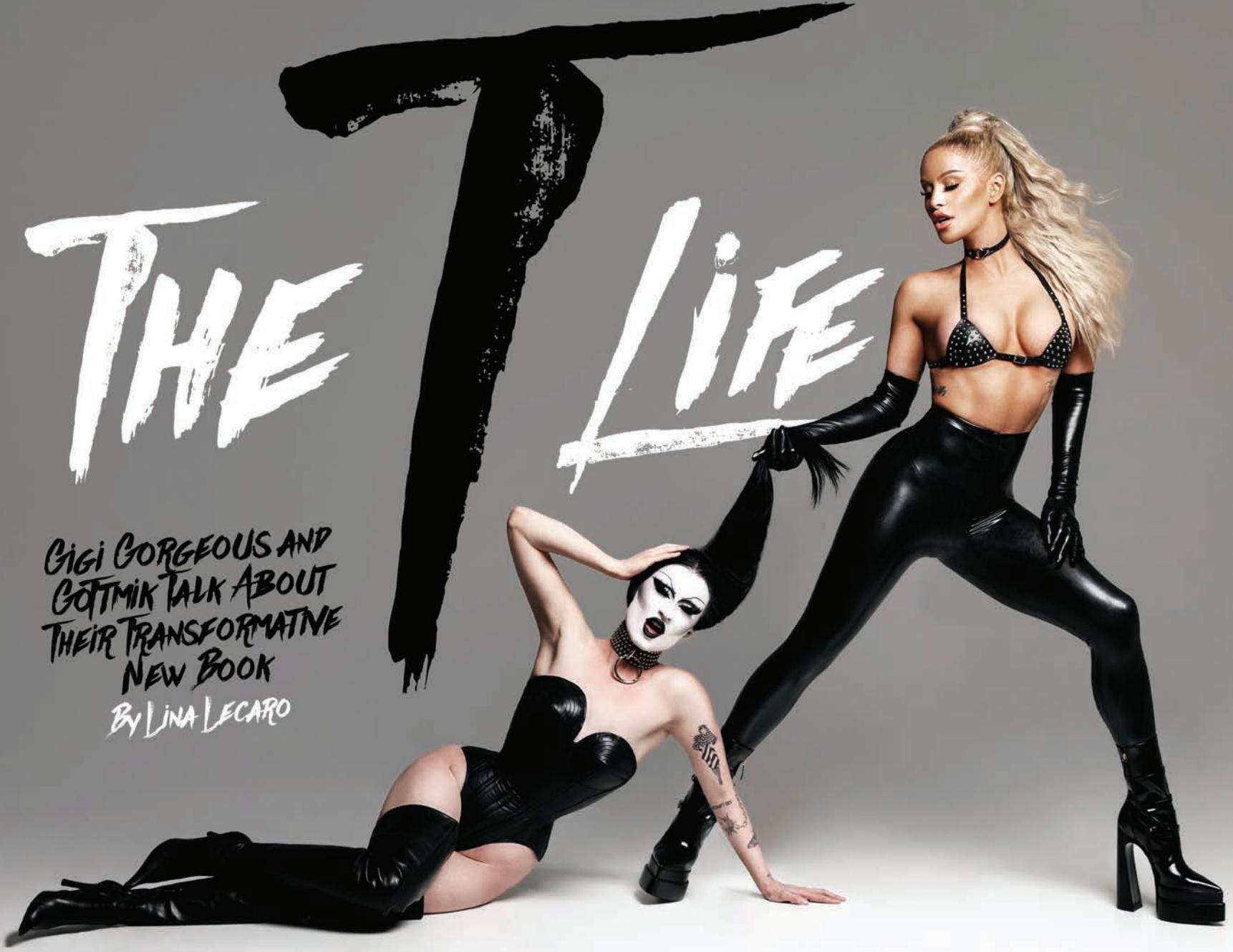
LAWWEEKLY®

FIVE BEACHY BRUNCHES FOR SUMMER
ROYAL AND THE SERPENT DROP PRIDE ANTHEM (BY ACCIDENT)
COUNCILMAN CURREN PRICE CHARGED WITH EMBEZZLEMENT

JUNE 23 - 29, 2023 / VOL. 45 / NO. 33
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THE LIFE

GIGI GORGEOUS AND
GÖTTMIK TALK ABOUT
THEIR TRANSFORMATIVE
NEW BOOK
BY LINA LECARO



CALENDAR

GO EDITORS' PICKS

ARTS

THURSDAY, JUNE 22

LA Design Festival at Helms Bakery and ROW DTLA. A citywide, interdisciplinary celebration of Los Angeles' deep design culture and community, LADF amplifies the voices of creatives and designers from all backgrounds and practices. Headquartered at ROW DTLA and Helms Bakery District in Culver City, with an outpost in Long Beach, LADF 2023 gathers local and global creatives for collaborative engagement and conversation. The majority of programs are free and open to the public and will encompass studio tours, panel discussions, salons, curated exhibitions, experiential installations, pop-ups, and a block party. *Thursday, June 22 - Sunday, June 25; Exhibitions at both downtown and Culver City locations open 10am-4pm daily; check website for event schedules at all locations; mostly free; ladesignfestival.org.*

Summer Dances at L.A. Dance Project. L.A.

A program that showcases 3 important contemporary visions of American dance. *5 Live Calibrations*, a ballet by Madeline Hollander, is composed of five movements inspired by physical techniques for calibration, re-orientation, geo-location, and balance, as practiced on human, industrial, and cosmic scales. *Quartet for Five* by Bobbi Jene Smith + Or Schraiber adheres to the formal outline of Glass' quartet, as five people unravel what is hidden between them. *In Everyone Keeps Me* by Pam Tanowitz a combination of intentional unpredictability, whimsical complexity and natural drama creates a clever weaving of movement, music, and space. *2245 E. Washington Blvd., downtown; Performances Thursday, June 22 - Saturday, July 1; \$25-\$45; ladanceproject.org.*

FRIDAY, JUNE 23

Devon DeJardin: In the Shadows at UTA Artist Space. With a background studying spiritual traditions from around the world, and an appreciation for the emotional, muscular abstraction of Picasso, Nevelson, Duchamp, Krasner, DeJardin's paintings, drawings,



UTA Artist Space
 Devon DeJardin
What Is Done In The Dark
 (Photo by Je~McClane)



and sculpture reference the body, forces of nature, and the application of philosophy to lived experience. With a sense of geometry that is both architectural and organic, and a refined palette that highlights the life of the mind, DeJardin muses on strength, fragility, control, and surrender. *403 Foothill Rd., Beverly Hills; Opening Reception: Friday, June 23, 6-8pm; On view through July 29; free; utaartistspace.com.*

Farah Atassi: Mechanical Cabaret at Francois Ghebaly.

The French-Syrian artist Farah Atassi uses the language of Cubism and the legacy of modernist masters to render views of everyday life. Through a meticulous collage of sourced imagery, graphic patterns

and fragments of art history, she creates thick paintings incorporating a dense layering of oil and glycerol geometric forms. A new exhibition presents two distinct but interrelated bodies of work, each demonstrating the artist's recent explorations in composition and art-historical genealogy. *2245 E. Washington Blvd., downtown; Opening reception: Friday, June 23, 5-8pm; On view through July 22; free; ghebaly.com.*

CHAOS at Carpenters Workshop. A group show curated by Alexander May of SIZED Studio marking one year since the launch of the Carpenters Workshop physical gallery space in Los Angeles, this exhibition is curated to illustrate the breadth of the gallery's collaborative approach in all forms of artistic expression, using form and function as a guiding principle. The show encompasses the work of over 20 renowned artists, including Ingrid Donat, Sterling Ruby, Vincenzo De Cotiis, Tomas Houseago, Victor Barragan, Suda Kokuta and Rick Owens. *7070 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood; Opening reception: Friday, June 23, 6-9pm; On view through September 9; free; carpentersworkshopgallery.com.*

SATURDAY, JUNE 24

MAPPING Performance: 10 Years of Metro Art Presents at Union Station. Commemorating 10 years of arts and cultural programming inspired by the greater Los Angeles area and the people Metro serves each day, Metro Arts celebrates this milestone with percussion-driven music and dance. Saturday will highlight Southeast Asian traditions and diasporic artists who bring their cultural backgrounds into contem-

porary practices; while Sunday's highly participatory program highlights Afro-Brazilian traditions, such as capoeira, which blends music, dance, and acrobatics, as well as samba-reggae. *800 N. Alameda St., downtown; Saturday-Sunday, June 24-25; free; art.metro.net.*

Womxn in Windows presents American Gurl at Hauser & Wirth Los Angeles.

Womxn in Windows, a platform whose mission is to share the perspectives of women of color through video art, film, and performance, presents an ongoing curatorial project featuring work that explores all shades of American Dreaming. Co-curated by Zehra Zehra and Kilo Kish, *American Gurl* continues themes from Kish's musical work of the same title. The installment takes shape in eight films by intergenerational artists with curiosity around the perspectives and nuances within the Black feminine experience, and our relationships to beauty, success, freedom, and power in America. *901 E. Third St., downtown; Opening reception: Saturday, June 24, 6-9pm; On view through July 30; free; hauserwirth.com.*

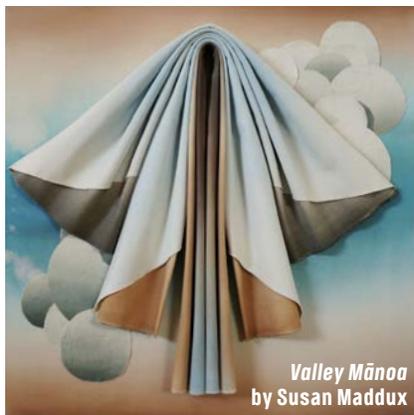
SUNDAY, JUNE 25

A Bigger Splash at 2220 Arts + Archives.

L.A. Filmforum and Other Aspects come together to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Jack Hazan's creative documentation and artist film, *A Bigger Splash*. As summer weather finally comes on, revisit the creation of one of David Hockney's legendary California poolside works alongside the agonizing breakup with boyfriend (and L.A. native) Peter Schlesinger, the muse and subject of some of Hockney's best-known works. *2220*



HWLA
"American Girl"
Presented by Womxn in
Windows



Valley Mānoa
by Susan Maddux

Beverly Blvd., Westlake; Sunday, June 25,
7:30pm; \$10 (21+); 2220arts.org.

Heidi Duckler Dance: Ebb & Flow Chinatown at L.A. State Historic Park. A free, family-friendly community arts festival returns for the 14th year. The program explores climate change, nature, humanity, and health through dance, visual arts, music, and technology. HDD has commissioned eight interdisciplinary artists to create site-specific performances in response to environmental themes, including works by local artists Andersmith, HIBISCUS TV, Marie Osterman, Mawusi Nenonene, Stephaine Sherwood and Katie Shanks, and Victoria Villamil (Tori Cristi), plus HDD Artist in Residence Raymond Ejiofor, and Duckler. 1245 N. Spring St., Chinatown; Sunday, June 25, 3-5pm; free; heididuckler.org.

MUSIC

JUNE 23-29
Barenaked Ladies
The Greek Theatre

Semisonic and Del Amitri complete this impressive trio of '80s and '90s alt-pop bands. Headliners the Barenaked Ladies might be

best know for the "One Week" single, but their rapid fire, quirky delivery has carried them through 13 excellent albums. This one will be a riot from start to finish. 7 p.m. on Friday, June 23 at the Greek Theatre, \$19.50+, lagreektheatre.com.

Dum Dum Fest
The Echo

Dum Dum Records has assembled a wonderful lineup for their Dum Dum Fest at the Echo, with filmmaker Actually Huizenga's three-piece Patriarchy headlining. "Exploring themes of sex, power, subversion, and death, the group draws inspiration from interests in everything from Ancient Greek Mythology to 80's slasher films," they say. Also on the bill is Taleen Kali, Iress, and Lauren Lakis. 7 p.m. on Saturday, June 24 at the Echo, \$36, theecho.com.

Tarja
The Belasco

Nightwish may still be a going concern, but everybody knows that their best work was done when operatic songbird Tarja was singing for them. No matter, Nightwish found a new vocalist, while Tarja has now released eight glorious opera metal solo opuses. She's a magnificent singer, as the Belasco show will prove. 7 p.m. on Tuesday, June 27 at the Belasco, \$35, thebelasco.com

Sweet
Whisky A Go Go

There are two versions of British glitter legends the Sweet on the road — the European version headed up by guitarist Andy Scott, and the American Lineup which, until his death in 2020, featured bassist Steve Priest. This is where it gets ropery, because the American Sweet continues to tour with no original members. By all accounts, they're a wonderful tribute, so make of that what you will. RODG, Blaze Francisco, Forbidden June, Laroca Laroca, Sjobeck, and Blondy and perform. 7 p.m. on Thursday, June 29 at the Whisky A Go Go, \$20, whiskyagogo.com.

BREATHERRR PRESENTS

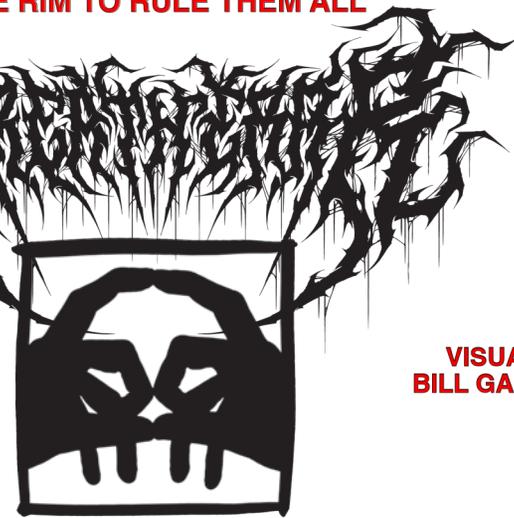
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COUNCILMAN CURREN PRICE CHARGED WITH EMBEZZLEMENT

District 9 Councilman Curren Price faces embezzlement charges, putting his future on the council in jeopardy

BY ISAI ROCHA



Los Angeles City Councilman Curren Price, 79, was charged with 10 counts of embezzlement, three counts of perjury and two counts of conflict of interest, on June 13.

The Los Angeles District Attorney's Office said Price allegedly did not list more than \$150,000 his wife received between 2019 and 2021 from real estate developers. Price then allegedly voted in favor of projects linked to the developers.

It also is alleged that Price received about \$33,800 in medical coverage for his wife, who he was not yet married to at the time.

"Today's charges against Councilman Curren Price are the result of a thorough investigation into allegations of public corruption," District Attorney George Gascón said in a statement. "This alleged conduct undermines the integrity of our government and erodes the public's trust in our elected officials.

We will continue to work tirelessly to root out corruption at all levels and hold accountable those who betray the public's trust."

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass has not commented on the charges, but Zach Seidl, a spokesman for Bass said in a statement, "The Mayor has yet to review the charges filed earlier today but she is saddened by this news."

The charges filed on Price come on the heels of former Councilman Mark Ridley-Thomas' March 30 conviction for corruption charges.

The council also lost its 2022 president, Nury Martinez, after a scandal involving leaked tapes with unsavory conversations involving her and councilmembers Kevin de Leon and Gil Cedillo.

In January, former Councilman Jose Huizar pleaded guilty to federal racketeering, conspiracy and tax evasion charges, in connection to a multi-year scheme involving himself and former

Councilman Mitch Englander, who was sentenced to 14 months in federal prison for his involvement. Price was among the councilmembers being investigated by the FBI in the corruption probe, but was ultimately not charged.

As of this writing, Price has not been suspended from the council, although Los Angeles City Council President Paul Krekorian filed a motion to do so, pending a council vote.

"... I know that all of us were stunned by the news that was reported yesterday," Krekorian said. "Today, I am filing a motion to begin the process for suspension of Councilmember Price. That does not presuppose an outcome in any way, but I think that it's important that this council have the opportunity to consider what the best course of action should be, given the pending criminal charges against our colleague."

The motion will be sent to the council rules committee before being put to a vote by the council members.

Price has stepped down from his position as council president pro tempore and council committee roles, but has not stated intentions to leave his District 9 council position.

The investigation is ongoing and Price's arraignment date has not been set.

TEXAS GOVERNOR SENDS BUSLOAD OF MIGRANTS TO LOS ANGELES

Without warning, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott sent a bus of asylum-seeking migrants to Los Angeles, from Texas, on June 14.

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass said the governor's stunt was not surprising and the city had a plan in place to give aid to the migrants.

Anticipating the bus arrival, Bass said there were LAPD, LAFD and members from nonprofit organizations ready to receive the migrants at Union Station in downtown L.A.

"Los Angeles is not a city motivated by hate or fear and we absolutely will not be swayed or moved by petty politicians playing with human lives," Bass said in a statement Wednesday. "We are a city that seeks to treat all people with dignity and compassion and we will continue to work closely with nonprofit organizations, including the L.A. Welcomes Collective, as well as with our County, State and Federal partners."

Abbott took credit for the buses, saying he will continue to transport migrants in Texas to sanctuary states such as California.

"Los Angeles is a major city that migrants seek to go to, particularly now that its city leaders approved its self-declared sanctuary city status," Abbott said in a statement. "Our border com-

munities are on the frontlines of President Biden's border crisis, and Texas will continue providing this much-needed relief until he steps up to do his job and secure the border."

The migrants were repeatedly reunited with family across the state after being sheltered at St. Anthony's Croatian Catholic Church in Chinatown.

Abbott and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis have both taken credit for transporting asylum-seekers to California cities. Earlier in June, DeSantis said he boarded a group of migrants on a flight to Sacramento.

In response to the migrant arrivals, California Gov. Gavin Newsom called DeSantis a "small, pathetic man," on Twitter, later elaborating that DeSantis was using human beings as "pawns for his political advancement."

KEENAN ANDERSON: L.A. FACES \$100M WRONGFUL DEATH LAWSUIT FOR LAPD TASER INCIDENT

The city of Los Angeles faces a \$100 million lawsuit that alleges LAPD's use of a taser killed Keenan Anderson during a Jan. 3 incident.

Members of Anderson's family announced the suit in Ladera Heights Monday, with civil rights attorneys Ben Crump and Carl Douglas on hand for a press conference.

While the Los Angeles County Medical Examiner-Coroner determined Anderson's death was caused by an enlarged heart and cocaine use, the family believes Anderson died of cardiac arrest caused by repeated taser stuns from officers, with Douglas saying, "I care not what the coroner's office says in terms of his having cocaine in his system at the time of his death."

LAPD said the incident began as Anderson, 31, was involved in a hit-and-run accident and was approached by an officer. Police body camera footage was released showing parts of the encounter, including the officer's applying the stuns before taking him to a local hospital where he was pronounced dead hours later.

While the coroner provided a cause of death for Anderson, the "manner of death" has not yet been established with the investigation ongoing.

On Jan. 21, weeks after the incident, Anderson's family filed a \$50 million claim for damages against the city, arguing the officers were not properly trained and claiming "deadly force" was used.

The claim was denied by the city. Anderson was a Washington D.C. native, in Los Angeles visiting family. He was a cousin of Black Lives Matter co-founder Patrisse Cullors and a teacher. [A]

FOOD

FIVE BEACHY BRUNCHES FOR SUMMER

Time to head west

BY MICHELE STUEVEN



It's officially summer and for the time being anyway, the gloom of June and the gray of May are behind us, and it's time to head to the beach. Catch up on your vitamin D with these beachy brunches.

City Cruises Marina Del Rey has revamped its Entertainer vessel, the flagship of the fleet and the largest charter yacht in the Marina with a new weekend brunch cruise, featuring mimosas, a buffet, endless dessert table, live music dancing. The mellow two-hour cruise through the Marina casts off in Fisherman's Village, and includes eggy and meaty breakfast staples, smoked salmon platters, roast beef, potatoes, French toast and mounds of various salads. A dinner cruise also is available.

Shutters on the Beach will celebrate 30 years with a jazz brunch every weekend in the courtyard of 1 Pico. Menu high-

lights include lobster Benedict, caprese frittata, chitarra carbonara and breakfast flatbread. The Bubbles and Jazz Brunch every Saturday features tapas-style benedicts, sizzling skillet and brunch classics, alongside the Seaside Jazz Trio featuring local vocalists weekly. A selection of vintage and non-vintage champagnes from Perrier-Jouët, the Épernay, France-based producer, are served from a vintage-style champagne cart.

BALEENkitchen at The Portofino Hotel & Marina overlooking the historic Redondo Beach marina, the restaurant and bar will roll out a series of summer events, in addition to the weekend brunch that features an artisanal toast bar, a birria Benedict with braised lamb leg and beef brisket, bacon-potato hash and ancho chile hollandaise.

There's also **Pedals & Pints** every Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6



p.m., with free beer tastings and complimentary VIP bike parking all summer long.

The REI Golden Hour Kayak will take place on June 23 with a coastal kayaking tour from the Portofino Hotel in King Harbor along the shoreline, for a glimpse of orange Garibaldi, pelicans, sea lions, and bottlenose dolphins. The paddle is good for ages 12 and up. They provide all the necessary gear and go over kayaking basics before getting started. \$125 per person.

If you're looking for the sexiest hues rancheros alive, head down to the Golden Bull in Santa Monica Canyon, steps from the beach. Two sunny-side-up eggs top a tower of crispy corn tortillas, carnitas, black beans, pico de gallo, salsa verde, cheddar cheese, guacamole, and pickled peppers and onions. The French toast sticks are made with custard-soaked brioche that's dusted with

cinnamon sugar and slathered in berries, bananas and maple syrup.

The beautifully renovated historic Georgian Hotel Santa Monica is now serving a glamorous brunch with Nancy Silverton alumnus Executive Chef David Almany at the helm, with highlights including an Italian Benedict, challah French toast and evergreen omelet with goat cheese, herbs and arugula, as well as oyster crudo.

The Georgian has been carefully restored by Jonathan Blanchard and Nicolo Rusconi of BLVD Hospitality. Though the eye of leading interior architecture and design firm, Fettle, the property's style offers a glimpse into the hotel's 1930s heyday. The original building's detailed features have been maintained, including the building's signature turquoise façade that has been part of the Ocean Avenue skyline since 1933. [A]



THE T LIFE

Gigi Gorgeous and Gottmik Talk About Their Transformative New Book

BY LINA LECARO • PHOTOS COURTESY OF GOTTMIK & GIGI GORGEOUS

Few topics have deepened the political divide like transgender issues have in the past couple of years, and that, it seems, is no coincidence. As society becomes more inclusive and accepting, those threatened by what they don't understand have seized upon trans and queer issues in general, spreading misinfor-

mation and fear as a way to maintain power and a suppressive status quo. But humanity and unity will keep moving forward, regardless. As conservatives and religious zealots fight against the shift of thought and shattering of constructs surrounding gender and sexuality, those who believe in body autonomy and personal choice (and more so, those

who have a trans or nonbinary person they know and care about) will focus on promoting unconditional love and support.

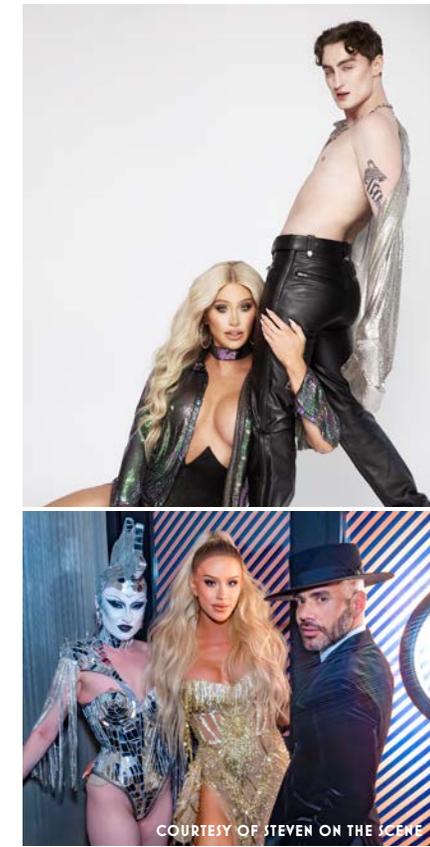
And now more than ever, living one's truth publicly and unapologetically is the ultimate form of activism and push-back. Few embody these ideas better than Gigi Gorgeous and Gottmik, two bodacious media figures and beloved personalities in the trans community who also happen to be close friends, learning and growing together on individual paths toward self-acceptance, made all the more manageable (and seemingly more fun) by their connection.

Their new book, *The T Guide - Our Trans Experience and a Celebration of Gender Expression - Man, Woman, Nonbinary, and Beyond* (Penguin/Random House), is an expansive volume featuring everything you ever wanted to know about being trans/queer but were afraid to ask, written by the pair and featuring dozens of contributors.

As Pride month continues louder than

ever by necessity in the wake of hateful legislation in states like Florida and Texas, the book is essential reading for a much wider audience than might be apparent at first glance. Yes, it will be a godsend for people struggling with gender identity questions, but it's also meant as a helpful guide for families seeking to comprehend how their sons, daughters and gender-fluid kids (or their friends) feel, wherever they might be in their journeys. Even those who don't have a trans person in their lives will find much to enjoy and learn from in this colorful, conversational, user-friendly book.

"I think Gigi and I did a really good job at making this feel like a conversation between two friends, so I hope when people are reading it they feel that they're listening to a friend talking," says Gottmik, whose legal name is Kade Gottlieb, in a recent group chat on Zoom alongside co-writer Gorgeous (aka Gigi Gorgeous Getty). "We've pretty much covered a lot of the bases - we have Sarah McBride, the



first trans Senator, in the book, and we have really, every type of person ever, to show that you are talking to trans people every day out there.”

Gottlieb says that fighting against negative trans portrayals and “the crazy media push of like this lewd, insane type of person,” was a major goal. “Girl, we are doctors, we’re senators, we’re teachers, we are all around you,” he says. “We’ve always been here and we’re always going to be here!”

While trans people of the past were more secretive and in the shadows, mostly for their own safety, the fact that they aren’t so much anymore has led to backlash from people who question their increased visibility. Even those who support trans people in theory still have some hangups. “The American public’s views on trans people at the moment, especially when it comes to trans youth and how young is too young to really declare or know one’s gender identity, has varied and become more complex, especially as Republican rhetoric has gotten in the mix and wrongly equated validation with indoctrination. (Read our 2021 cover story about Trans Visibility in Entertainment at LAWeekly.com.)

“The *T Guide* will only be seen as encouragement for young people who have questions about being non-binary or are actually trans. This book, as with movies or music featuring trans characters and creators, can’t “groom” someone into be-

ing trans who is not. It doesn’t work that way and that’s just one of many truths that becomes clear as you read the individual stories and share the intimate and honest conversations from the authors throughout.

“The adults who think that are uneducated 100%,” says Gottlieb. “They’re scared of the unknown. And they’re scared that the unknown is their children. I know my family was kind of scared at first, too. I had to take it upon myself to educate them and teach them that it’s not a scary thing. It’s always been like this. And I’m the same person. I just didn’t have the language to communicate it before, because I didn’t have anyone that was like me before. So it’s just an educational process.”

“I feel like those who need to hear it will absorb it,” adds Getty about the book. “And those who don’t will just be educated. You know, it’s not going to change anyone. I think if you ask the majority of queer people, ‘when did you know?’ they’ll mostly say, I always knew.”

Before she became Gigi “Gorgeous” Getty, GG was a popular YouTube personality known for creating and starring in the reality program *The Avenue*. She became even more famous after coming out as a trans woman in 2013 (when she took the Gorgeous nickname, while also legally using her family surname, Lazaratto). Canadian-born, she came to L.A. as her online presence grew as the

first social media figure to document her gender transition with videos of cosmetic procedures and personal experiences. In 2017, she also shared her life in a documentary called *It is Everything: Gigi Gorgeous*.

Identifying as pansexual (as does Gottlieb), she met Nats Getty, a member of the Getty family, during Paris Fashion Week while modeling for their brother August Getty, who is a designer. Nats (who is a trans man) proposed a year later and the pair married July of 2019. Watching Nats’ path to his true self and how the couple navigated it all on a public platform was inspiring to Gottlieb and the friendship between all three grew soon after.

Gottmik – whose name is an obvious play on the dairy industry slogan – made “herstory” as a contestant on *RuPaul’s Drag Race* Season 13. He was the first trans man to compete on the beloved reality contest, making the top 4, and rocking his signature gothy/kabuki-inspired white makeup looks and decidedly rock n’ roll and fetish-inspired fashions. While RuPaul did not allow trans contestants on the show at first, he ultimately changed his mind and trans women have competed ever since. Gottlieb remains the only trans man to have been on the show, but his appearance was notable not only for his gender, but for how he blurred it with ease, showcasing both masculine and feminine looks and using both pronouns (“she” in drag and “he” out of drag). It felt

fresh coming from a trans man, even if it wasn’t new – most drag queens use both pronouns depending on the looks they are representing.

A popular makeup artist who worked with celebrities and the L.A. drag community long before *Drag Race*, Gottlieb was also involved with Hollywood clubs before coming on the show, so he is very much entrenched in local LGBTQ+ nightlife and creative circles. At just 20 years old he was the VIP door host at Andrés Rigal’s 2016 gathering called *Commodore*. “L.A. really opened my heart and soul and mind up to everything that I am now,” shares the Arizona-born Angeleno. “Andrés saw me out here doing crazy makeup and crazy looks, and in the L.A. spirit, he took me in and that’s kind of what a lot of the promoters and queens out here do — they see your talent and they want to nurture it. And he let me work his door at the clubs. So I was working in drag and at the door at all these L.A. parties, and then I started hosting them.”

“There’s nothing like L.A. nightlife,” adds Gorgeous, who first met Gottlieb, they both recall, at *The Abbey* in West Hollywood. “It holds a very special place in both of our hearts. I remember growing up in Toronto and going out and, you know, it was either straight or gay clubs. When I moved to L.A., I was just so taken aback that there’s so much blending that happens here. People are really open

mind here. ° ere’s almost no labels. I remember going to Bootsy Bellows and being like, ‘oh my god, half the scene is gay and half the scene is straight.’ It’s so blended and it made me feel really safe and free to express myself.”

Rigal, who currently throws the hot queer parties such as *Evita* and *Summertramp*, says that L.A. clubs “allow for self-discovery so that people may find the courage, power and community to follow their destiny and ultimately find their true selves, whatever that might be.” Of Gottlieb, he says, “never have I met someone with so much natural talent, ambition and drive to achieve whatever he dreams. I feel so grateful that I have been able to witness and support Kade through his chrysalis and proudly watch as the rest of the world experiences what I saw from day one — a diamond, legend, leader and visionary for our community.”

Speaking of leaders in the community—*The T Guide* is filled with personal stories and advice via well-known contributors, handpicked by the authors. “We definitely started with our idols,” says Getty. “Adam Lambert is a huge idol of Kade’s and Paris Hilton is a huge idol of mine... Amanda Lapore is a legend. ° ese were people that were no-brainers to us. Paris obviously is not transgender, but she is such an inspiration to me with the way that she lives her life and with her aesthetic ever since I was young. So I really wanted her to write the ‘tips for being feminine’ chapter. As far as how we chose what people would write about in the book — some people, we were like, ‘we really feel like you would fit in this chapter,’ but other people we were just like, ‘what do you want to write about? What haven’t you spoken about?’”

Some of the most impactful passages in *The T Guide* come not from famous people, but from the authors’ own parents, each of whom share their struggles with acceptance and how they came to it. Both Gigi and Kade came from conservative families, which made coming out hard for each.

“Being transgender is a journey, not a specific event. ° e personality of the individual does not change in that process. But how they present themselves to the world changes and evolves. Parents, family and friends have a decision to make early on. Do they want to figure out how to be supportive, or do they want to let their views and experiences get in the way of the person’s decisions and happiness?” — David Lazzarato, Gigi’s dad, in ° e T Guide

“First and foremost, love your child unconditionally. ° is not a ‘choice’ for them; it is who they are. It wasn’t easy for them to talk with you about something so crucial and personal. You may not understand yet and you may not be comfortable with what they are telling you,

but you need to listen, listen and listen some more. Ask questions. Do your own research and communicate openly. Be their safe haven. Be their home.” — Amy Gottlieb, Kade’s mom, in ° e T Guide

Beyond mourning the son or daughter they raised by their “dead name,” one of the hardest things for parents of trans people to deal with concerns worrying how the world will treat them. ° ere is much more acceptance these days, but there is also more resistance. And even loving, liberal people may have varying

on social media.

Getty and Gottlieb are, sadly, both familiar with the kind of online bullying and IRL bigotry that Mulvaney has dealt with. “You know, some people are given the beautiful gift of being able to be loud and proud and shameless, and other people go through their transitions really quietly,” muses Getty, who is friends with Mulvaney. “And I think people like Dylan and others within our community are really blessed with that kind of fearless attitude. Like, let me just share it all. ° ey’ve

goal to share my personal life there,” says Getty. “It really just unfolded that way. I’m like the queen of coming out online because I’ve come out I think four times. But that’s how I was feeling in the moment [and] that is beautiful in its own way. I’ve always received so much love and respect from my supporters and my following because they know that I’m always coming from an authentic place.”

“I’ve always been really open about my surgeries and things that I’ve done to modify myself to be happy,” she continues. “But in the book, I also talk about mistakes that I’ve made with that, and challenges that I faced because of that. ° at’s something that I’ve never shared.”

Gottlieb and Getty share a frank conversation near the middle of the book about bottom surgery (neither has had it and both want it), discussing their individual hopes for improvements on these medical procedures, and the pros, cons and risks of taking this step in general. It’s often the last part of the transition process and it is given the serious discussion it deserves.

It was a step out of Gottlieb’s comfort zone, for sure. “I’ve always been someone who believes that you don’t need surgery to be trans and it’s just like part of everyone’s individual journey,” he explains. “So I don’t usually like to talk about it that much. But this is a book about our personal experiences and medically transitioning is a huge part of my journey and will always be. So I talked about all the surgeries I have, and the surgeries I want to have, which I’ve never done before at all. It was kind of crazy and scary to write it down in a book [but] I have to remind myself that there’s definitely people out there who feel the exact same way, so it’s important to just be open and honest.”

In the end, *The T Guide* is a fascinating and entertaining read, and a beautiful book to look at, too. ° e images of Gigi and Kade, shot by beauty and celebrity photographer Shaun Vadella, are stunning, and they put a lot of what’s presented with words in a complementary visual context. Both authors are so beautifully themselves here, that they almost leap off the page with magnetism, allure and happiness.

“This is what trans joy looks like,” declares Gottlieb as we ask for final thoughts as the interview concludes. To which Getty adds, “° e general thing I want people to take away from the book is that trans people aren’t doing anything but living in their own truth. All we want is to just navigate through life and be accepted. Also, it really does transcend being transgender, because it’s just about humans and their struggles and friendships. It’s just all love.”

The T Guide is available wherever books are sold (and not banned).



views on hot button topics such as prom date outcsts, gender neutral bathrooms, who should compete in sporting competitions, and who should be spokespersons for their favorite products. Each issue has its own nuances and the public discourse rarely addresses them all. For example, the particularly massive uproar over Tik-Toker Dylan Mulvaney promoting Bub Light a er being sent cans with her image on them has been on the forefront of the cultural conversation, leading to boycotts of the beer and hate from “anti-woke” Right Wing figures and groups

saved so many lives, undoubtedly.”

Being so public does have its daunting moments, even for this seemingly bold and confident duo. ° ey are sharing what they’ve learned along the way and even acknowledging missteps as part of their individual paths, which is not easy to do, especially when naysayers tend to seize upon that. We asked if they had any regrets about what they’ve put out there thus far, and if they shared anything new about themselves in the book that they hadn’t in the past.

“I started online but it was never my

MUSIC

BATTLE ROYAL!

Royal and the Serpent drop Pride anthem (by accident)

BY BRETT CALLWOOD

When Royal and the Serpent, the musical project of Jersey-raised, L.A.-based artist Ryan Santiago, was preparing to release its new track “One Nation Underdogs,” it hadn’t occurred to Royal that the empowering LGBTQ+ anthem would be dropping just as Pride Month was kicking off. Talk about a happy accident!

But sheesh, as state after state goes out of its way to pass draconian, medieval laws aimed at stripping rights away from gay and trans people under the bogus guise of “protecting the children” (as if there’s any line connecting gay and trans people with pedophiles), this is the song that Pride 2023 needs. It’s a call to arms, a statement of intent, and it’s fucking powerful.

“At the beginning of the song, I rewrote the pledge of allegiance,” Royal says. “It’s basically a pledge to the LGBTQ+ community and there were a lot of people that didn’t like that, had a lot to say about that, and thought that I was disrespecting our country. I started getting some death threats. It got a little scary, and I just had to turn the app off for a few days. Get back grounded and realize it doesn’t fucking matter. These people are just typing shit on their keyboards. No one’s gonna come after me. I’m doing a good thing, so they can suck it!”

Indeed, they can suck it till their homophobic brains cave in. The last time we caught Royal and the Serpent live was a stellar headline show at the Troubadour, just after she’d gotten off tour with a newly pop-punk Demi Lovato. Since then, she’s been writing a lot of music and preparing for a headline show with Fall Out Boy. All of the writing has led to the first in a series of releases called Rat Trap I: The Blueprint. That’s where you can find “One Nation Underdogs” and another song called “Astroturf.” Royal’s plan is to drop one of these two-song releases every month for at least the rest of 2023.

“I just have so much music and I was originally really wanting to put an album out, but I was feeling like I had too much and I wanted to give people more,” she says. “I didn’t want to make it this really big build-up to just one explosion. I wanted to give people little mini stories to build the whole world. So we’re doing two songs at a time because I think that I personally prefer that. I think it’s nice to give people a little bit more backstory and content. It makes it a lot more fun.”

The first one, Royal says, was really important to her. She wanted to introduce the concept with strong content. As well as “One Nation Underdogs,” “Astroturf” is a tune about feeling that the grass is always greener on the other side. The next drop will come at the end of June, and so on. Despite this two-at-a-time approach,



Royal still believes that there’s a place for full-length albums in the streaming world.

“I don’t think albums will ever be done because I don’t think artists will ever be done with making albums,” she says. “It’s

a dream of mine to make one – I haven’t done it yet. I’d love to do it the old-fashioned way – hole up on a mountain somewhere with a few people, stay there for a month and write the whole project from start to finish. It’s not really that

conducive for that, the way that music is streamed and comes out these days, but I think that there’s nothing like it. Singles are great, double singles are great and EPs are great. But even as a listener, there’s nothing like sitting down and listening to an album front to back. It’s a journey that you can’t really replicate otherwise.”

Royal would, she says, compile these two-track releases into some sort of an album release, perhaps with bonus tracks, further down the line. It’ll be interesting to hear that progression, however we’re presented with it. Royal is a forward-thinking artist with a sound that evolves as she grows as a human.

“I think my music and my lyricism just kind of follow my growth as a human being,” she says. “Which I feel like is also appreciated by the people that are listening, because I think I like to tell the truth in my journey and I feel like that’s what resonates with people a lot.”

Having toured with Demi Lovato, and as she’s about to tour with Fall Out Boy, it’s evident that Royal and the Serpent could perform on a bill with just about anyone from the pop and alternative realms.

“I do think that I can chameleon into a lot of different spaces,” she says. “I’m finding even more lately that I fit less into the hard rock scene than I thought I did, and I’m leaning more towards wanting to head back in a pop direction. I’ve played a lot of these really heavy festivals and stuff, and I’m like, I don’t know if I fully fit in here as much as these other people do.”

She certainly fits in in Los Angeles, having moved here from Jersey when she was 18. Both regions, she says, have impacted her art a lot.

“I did a lot of musical theater when I was in Jersey, which is also common there because there’s Broadway obviously in New York,” she says. “There’s a lot more of that. I know New York has a music scene as well, but my music journey didn’t really start professionally until I was in my 20s.”

It’s going to be a big year then. A huge tour, and lots of new music. And merch.

“I just dropped a bunch of merch for Rat Trap I, and 100% of the proceeds for anything containing the pledge on the merch is going to the Trevor Project, so we’ve been trying to get a lot of money donated to them, especially for Pride month,” Royal says. “So just keep an eye on the stuff that’s happening. We’re trying to do our best to give back as much as we can.”

And that’s something to be proud of.

Royal and the Serpent’s Rat Trap I: The Blueprint is out now. The show with Fall Out Boy takes place at BMO Stadium on July 2 and July 3. [A]

CANNABIS

ALIEN LABS WINS ZALYMPIX

The Sacramento Monsters of Heat emerged victorious in the highly competitive Zalympix event

BY JIMI DEVINE



Alien Labs' Zkittlez strain secured top honors at last weekend's Zalympix competition hosted by Greenwolf.

With a record-breaking number of participants, this edition of Zalympix attracted more entries than all previous events combined. Alien Labs consistently demonstrated its excellence by placing among the top three or winning various categories in the past. How-

ever, this triumph marked their most significant achievement yet, as they added another three trophies to their ever-expanding collection.

Speculations arose last week regarding the challenging nature of the competition for Z due to the abundance of Zkittlez hybrids in the mix. Nevertheless, the judges ultimately disagreed, and Zkittlez claimed the highest podium. Since its meteoric rise in 2014, when it dominated

the Mendocino Secret Cup and secured a top-five spot at the High Times NorCal Cup, Zkittlez has continued to captivate enthusiasts. It became the first breakthrough strain since Cookies emerged in the late 2000s and would go on to be in the lineage of basically every hype strain that came after.

Before he departed with the trophies for Sacramento, we caught up with Alien Labs' founder, Ted Lidie. Our conversation began by highlighting the fact that this particular Zkittlez batch contributed the material that produced the original winning rosin entry at this year's Emerald Cup.

searching for exceptional genetics, but the past five years have been dedicated to cultivating our distinctive strains."

Lidie further noted that Alien Labs aims to reach a broader audience compared to Zalympix. As Lidie put it, their selection includes flavors that may not be as trendy, but cater to those seeking the unconventional. He pointed to weird Super Silver Haze crosses as a great example.

During the qualification round, Alien Labs relied on their Area 41 strain, but when it came to the finals, they had approximately two weeks' notice to make their choice.

"We had to locate a superb flower batch, and that particular strain generated significant hype," Lidie said. "My QC team, Justin and Jesse, and I had to sample numerous batches to identify the ultimate standout. The Zkittlez batch from the Merced site, cultivated by an outstanding team, truly excelled."

Lidie promptly acknowledged the high caliber of competition in the event. He expressed his belief that previous editions paled in comparison and commended all participants for delivering their finest work.

"It's astonishing. If you observe the evolution from the first event to this one, it's clear that people now have a much better understanding of quality," Lidie said. "The entries were all exceptional, with consistent white ash and enticing aromas."

Lidie sees the event as an indicator of overall improvement in quality within the recreational market.

"At least for those of us who participate and care about this industry, we are refining our craft. We won't let anyone undermine the recreational market because, in the end, it's the top-tier cultivators who produce the finest cannabis," Lidie asserted.

We inquired about Lidie's thoughts on winning what many consider to be the state's second most esteemed competition, trailing only The Emerald Cup. Lidie highlighted that these events cater to distinct audiences and asserted that the Zalympix victory would have a greater impact in New York City than an Emerald Cup win.

"I'm not criticizing the cup; I'm a judge myself. It's just that they attract different audiences, and The Emerald Cup holds diverse meanings for different individuals," Lidie clarified.

Lidie further elaborated on the nuances of indoor judging at Zalympix, emphasizing that participants invest \$700 per box, and the judges are accustomed to regularly sampling this caliber of cannabis. This differs from The Emerald Cup, where some judges only smoke indoor strains because they have to for the cup. [E]

We then delved into Lidie's decade-long pursuit of winning strains through diligent seed hunts. Like clockwork, he meticulously assesses hundreds of jars every few months, aiming to discover Alien Labs' next champion. We inquired whether he was disappointed that the victor did not arise from all that effort.

"Definitely, I would have loved to win with one of our own creations," Lidie told L.A. Weekly. "We've spent a decade

LGBTQ+ ELDERS SHARE ESSENTIAL AMERICAN STORIES IN *COMING OUT WEST*

BY SHANA NYS DAMBROT



Coming Out West
Santa Monica History Museum

LGBTQ+ history is essential American history, a rainbow prism through which to view our society's progresses and retrenchments across cultural, economic, scientific, political, legal, artistic, literary, and linguistic terrain. And as the Santa Monica History Museum's remarkable new exhibition *Coming Out West: LGBTQ+ Elders Share Their Stories* movingly demonstrates through its partnership with The Outwards Archive, the best way to record those histories is in the first-person stories of the people who lived them.

Within the small but mighty institution's galleries, *Coming Out West* occupies a central hall flanked by galleries dedicated to permanent displays on the city's establishment, early industries, iconic amusements, and famous residents (like Ambassador Shirley Temple Black) — and as of

June 17th joined by a new permanent gallery in conjunction with the Quinn Research Center presenting exhibitions that will center stories of Black Santa Monica. Curated from among the hundreds of stories from dozens of states already gathered in The Outwards Archive living library, the eight figures chosen represent not only strong ties to Santa Monica and the west side, but also a range of professions from artists to writers, lawyers, activists, and cultural figures who have indelibly shaped the region's LGBTQ+ community.

Rob Schwenker, the executive director of the Santa Monica History Museum, emphasizes the significance of this exhibition for both the city and the institution, stating, "In Santa Monica's history, there has never been an exhibition of this nature; given there are more than 240 pieces of anti-LGBTQ+ legislation making their

way through our government, now it is more important than ever to tell these stories."

And stories are told. As the Outwards mission is capturing, preserving, and sharing the stories of LGBTQ+ elders to honor pioneers' work and further spark needed social change, the interviews are of enduring interest to scholars, researchers, and historians. But they are also warm, personal, empathetic, moving, generous, supremely watchable, deeply relatable, and often quite funny episodes that lovingly present these figures as they really are — full human beings with complex thoughts, 20/20 hindsight, deep-rooted emotions, memories both fond and poignant to recall.

Anne Wallentine, the exhibition's curator, states, "With these artists, activists, writers, and philanthropists, we're excited to highlight the wonderful diversity of the LGBTQ+ community and the many ways people have created and lived their authentic lives."

Though the oral histories take center stage in the form of short video clips along with QR codes that lead back to the full, in-depth tapes at the Outwards website, these are augmented by a trove of compelling objects, ephemera, artworks, books, and photographs, going back decades. These are as eclectic as the interviewees themselves — from nightlife visionary Jewel Th is-Williams and her legendary establishment, Jewel's Catch One (aka The Catch), which offered one of the earliest Black and queer-friendly discos in the country; to the late Chuck Williams, whose groundbreaking donation of \$2.5 million established the renowned Williams Institute at UCLA School of Law, a leading LGBTQ+ academic center dedicated to rigorous research on sexual orientation and gender identity in legal and public policy.

Judy Abdo, a former Santa Monica city councilperson and one of the nation's earliest openly lesbian mayors, blazed her own trail of progress. Known for her passion as an educator, activist, and civic leader — and her rather epic collection of activist buttons carefully displayed on an American flag — Abdo spearheaded initiatives supporting environmental sustainability, rent control, early childhood education, and rights for those affected by HIV/AIDS. Like many of those interviewed, Abdo speaks freely about the early days of getting to know herself, trying to fit into social roles, and eventually finding a path to personal freedom that lit the way for her to live her best life as her truest self — and to make it easier for those who would come after her.

L. Frank, an esteemed Tongva-Ajachmem artist, writer, activist, and tribal scholar, adds a rich cultural perspective to the conversation, speaking eloquently

about the concept of the Two-Spirit pronoun *pó* — a contemporary term rooted in ancient traditions, encompassing fluid gender identities and sexual orientations among Indigenous peoples. Co-founding Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival, L. Frank diligently preserves and fosters the continuation of indigenous languages, alongside a robust and acclaimed visual art practice in painting and illustration.

Don Bachardy was a celebrated visual artist beloved for his captivating portraits, especially of his friends and fellow travelers in the art world. Represented with a self-portrait and one of his life partner Christopher Isherwood, much of Bachardy's interview centers on his earliest coming-of-age memories, his older brother who was also gay, their family dynamic and the world in which he grew up. Writer Terri de la Peña, a celebrated Chicana author and descendant of one of Santa Monica's oldest lines, the Marquez family, weaves her ancestral narrative into the story of finding herself and coming out to her community, which she rather did by writing the queer coming of age novel *Margins* in 1992.

Marianne Diaz is an educator, activist, and civic leader, who is dedicated to breaking the cycle of violence in marginalized communities and the founder of non-profit, CleanSlate, offering low-cost tattoo removal, therapy, support, and conflict resolution for former gang members, as well as further work with empowerment programs to uplift LGBTQ+ youth in the Watts community. She remembers with fondness being a kind of tomboy who took more pleasure in working on the car with her dad than playing with dolls or other cisnormative socialization expectations.

Mia Yamamoto, a recipient of the esteemed Harvey Milk Legacy Award, commands attention as a lawyer and transgender rights activist. Born in the Poston concentration camp in Arizona, her early experiences shaped her profound understanding of racial injustice in America. Mia emerges as a relentless advocate for the transgender community, earning accolades for her tireless work both inside and outside the courtroom. In addition to which, the wit, glamor, sparkle, and toughness that has made her a brilliant attorney makes her interview especially watchable, and her stories of coming out as trans to a legal community of judges, attorneys, court reporters, and especially rough-trade clients are simply marvelous. She's a natural star. They all are.

Coming Out West is on view at the Santa Monica History Museum through Dec. 17; 1350 Seventh St., Santa Monica; \$5 admission, free on the first Sunday of the month; and on June 24, there will be a community open house with free admission; santamonicahistory.org. [R]

LA WEEKLY CLASSIFIEDS

EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

Solar Project Mgmt Specialist: Req'd: BA in Biz, Biz Econ, or related. \$62,500/year. Mail Resume: Electri-Tech Services, Inc. 19481 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748

Reinforcing Steel Estimator: B.S. in Civil Engineering req'd. Wage: \$40,290/Yr. Mail resume to: Rebar Engineering, Inc., 10706 Painter Ave., Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670, Attn: K. Krebs.

SameSky Health Inc. in North Hollywood, CA is seek'g a Sr. Software Engineer to dsgn & dvlp hi quality, scalable, custom sw solut'ns. No trvl; WFH bnft. Salary: \$168,000/yr. Send resumes to: SameSky Health, Inc., ATTN: HR, 5200 Lankershim Blvd., Ste 310, North Hollywood, CA 91601.

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ASIC Electrical Engineer - Digital Design Req'd: BA, Electr. Eng'g, Comp. Eng'g, or similar; & 24 mths exper. in Electr Eng'g - ASIC Digital Design; or MA in Electr. Eng'g, Comp. Eng'g, or similar. Special reqmts: proficiency of: CMOS VLS design, clock design in digital circuits, Timing analysis of CMOS digital circuits, Verilog, Syst.Verilog, Perl, & Cadence Innovus. Will accept spec. reqmts thru exper. &/or coursework. Duties: CMOS digital custom low-power IC design, Full-time. \$134,875-\$134,875/year. Forza Silicon Corp., Pasadena, CA 91107. Email resume to Sam Bagwell, Dir. US Design Svcs - Sam.Bagwell@ametek.com

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LA WEEKLY Bulletin



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