

# LAWEEKLY<sup>®</sup>

PEE-WEE HERMAN STAR  
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GO *COUCOU*

REGINA SPEKTOR HITS  
THE GREEK

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## PARTY PRESERVATION

WITH FAUSTIAN SOCIETY, BEAUTY OF BURLESQUE AND MORE, THE GLOBE THEATRE BRINGS BACK NIGHTLIFE'S WICKED WHIMSY

BY LINA LECARO

CALENDAR

GO EDITORS' PICKS

ARTS

THURSDAY, AUGUST 3

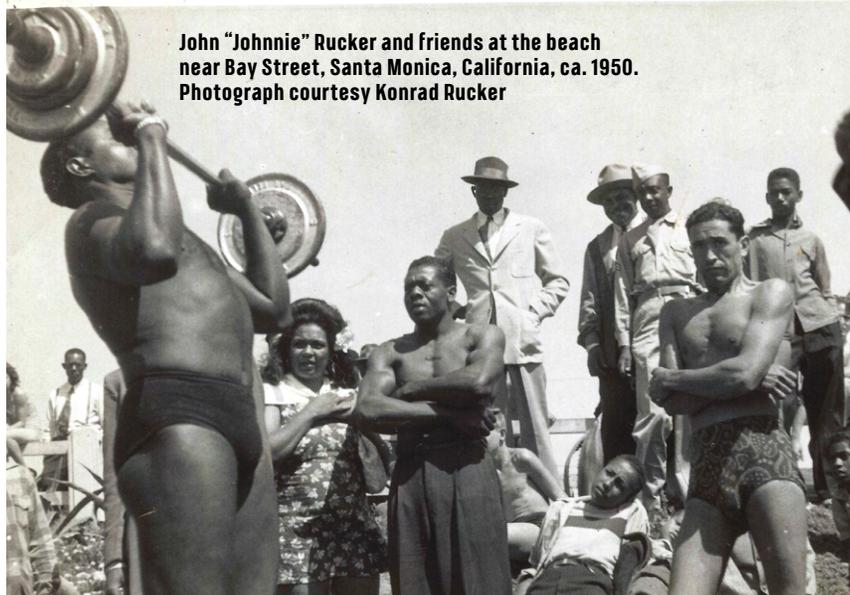
**Eddy Chen: Idol Moments and Valentin Goppel: Between the Years, at Leica Gallery.**

Eddy Chen's photography showcases a captivating visual narrative that offers a unique glimpse into the world of filmmaking. Departing from traditional unit photography, Chen adopts an editorial approach to shooting stills on set, resulting in an experience that goes beyond the ordinary to create an inviting atmosphere that allows audiences to immerse themselves in the world of The Idol. Valentin Goppel offers a personal portrayal of his generation's emotions during the COVID-19 era. His pictures oscillate between staging and observation, serving as a platform to articulate his inner thoughts and anxieties. *8783 Beverly Blvd., West Hollywood; Opening reception: Thursday, August 3, 6-8pm; On view through September 11; free; leicagallery.com.*

FRIDAY, AUGUST 4

**Reopening Celebration & New Exhibitions at CAAM.**

Celebrate CAAM's post-renovation reopening with DJs, food trucks, a beer garden, and an early look at a suite of five new exhibitions. Tatyana Fazlalizadeh (of the iconic Stop Telling Women to Smile public art campaign) considers Black image making as a site of protest, contestation, affirmation, and possibility. We Are Not Strangers Here: African American Histories in Rural California tells the histories of Black Californians who contributed to rural areas, working the land, building homesteads, fighting school segregation, training teachers, establishing independent settlements, and protecting equal rights. The short film Keeping Time by Darol Olu Kae ruminates on the Pan Afrikan Peoples Arkestra (the Ark), an avant-garde jazz group from South Central, active since 1961, defined by its malleability and allegiance to the pure and nuanced jazz forms. Black California Dreamin': Claiming Space at America's Leisure Frontier illuminates Californians who worked to make leisure here an open, inclusive reality in the first half of the twentieth century. A Movement in Every Direction: Legacies of the Great Migration



John "Johnnie" Rucker and friends at the beach near Bay Street, Santa Monica, California, ca. 1950. Photograph courtesy Konrad Rucker

explores the profound social and cultural impact of the Great Migration from historical and personal perspectives. *600 State Dr., Expo Park; Friday, August 4, 7-11pm; Exhibitions on view through January/March; free; caamuseum.org.*

SATURDAY, AUGUST 5

**Bridgefest 2023 at 6th Street Viaduct.**

A free weekend-long festival celebrating the arts and local businesses on both ends of the 6th Street Bridge. August 4-6 sees happy hour specials and live entertainment at participating businesses in the Arts District and Boyle Heights; Saturday, August 5, 1-9pm celebrate the arts, creativity, diversity, sustainability, and local businesses at an all-day festival on and across the ribbon concrete expanse. *650 Clarence St. / 600 S. Santa Fe, Boyle Heights / Downtown; free; bridgefestla.com.*

**Thania Petersen: Zamunda Forever at Nicodim Gallery.**

A South African multidisciplinary artist who uses embroidery, photography, performance, and installation to address the intricacies and complexities of identity in contemporary South Africa, Petersen's first solo exhibition in the States is divided into three bodies of intricately embroidered narrative textiles, covering her family's history, their present-day life as seen from the outside, then finally portrayals of their familial dynamic in more personal settings. Juxtaposed, the three series are an honest depiction of how the journey that brought the artist's Cape Malay people to South Africa resulted in a separation of selves that exist symbiotically to construct a new cohesive and contemporary identity. *1700 S. Santa Fe., downtown; Opens: Saturday, August 5; On view through September 9; free; nicodimgallery.com.*

SUNDAY, AUGUST 6

**Monica Rodriguez: The Land of Promise at**

**Winslow Garage.**

In drawings that reconsider the Spanish conquest of what would become California, the artist mixes cartographic land surveys and botanic plant studies to tease out the ruling abstractions at work within the 16th and 17th centuries' "civilizing" projects to map land, plants and people. In the juxtaposition between the cartographic and the taxonomical, a narrower definition of mapping is destabilized, while the colonial and imperial legacies are made legible in the ongoing language of neutral scientific objectivity. *3540 Winslow Dr., Silver Lake; Opening reception: Sunday, August 6, 5-8pm; On view through September 10; free; winslowgarage.com.*

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 9

**Screening and Discussion: Art21 and Christine Sun Kim at ICA LA.**

In her Bounce Back mural on view at ICA LA, Christine Sun Kim's practice considers how sound operates in society, deconstructing the politics of sound and exploring how oral languages operate as social currency. In partnership with Art21, ICA LA presents a sneak peek of the latest episode of Art in the Twenty-First Century, "Friends & Strangers." Premiering on PBS later this year, "Friends and Strangers" celebrates artists, including Christine Sun Kim, whose work facilitates collective responses to hardship, builds and sustains communities, and works to bring us closer to one another. *1717 E. 7th St., downtown; Wednesday, August 9, 7-9pm; free; theicala.org.*

MUSIC

AUGUST 4-10

**Taylor Swift SoFi Stadium**

Taylor Swift's Eras tour is on its way to

becoming one of the biggest if not the biggest tour in music history. This thing has simply been a phenomenon, with the country-turned-pop megastar riding on a wave to pop immortality. The fervor displayed from fans before, during and after the show is the sort of the thing we maybe haven't really seen since Beatlemania. This week, she arrives in L.A. for six stadium shows and her fans here are sure to be just as enthusiastic. It's going to be an experience. Haim also plays, and Gracie Adams, OWENN, and GAYLE alternate the opening slot. *6:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 3, Friday, August 4, Saturday, August 5, Monday, August 7, Tuesday, August 8 and Wednesday, August 9 at the SoFi Stadium, sofistadium.com.*

**Suzanne Santo Moroccan Lounge**

Suzanne Santo spoke to us in 2017 when she said of the HoneyHoney hiatus, "We're the best of friends, but we wanted to try something different. We still champion each other, and are so supportive and excited. It's a departure, but I still run a lot of big decisions by Ben and vice versa. We still figure it out as we're trying solo stuff out." Six years later and her solo career is in full swing. Catch her with Joshua & the Holy Rollers. *6:30 p.m. on Friday, August 4 at Moroccan Lounge, \$20, themoroccan.com.*

**International Pop Overthrow The Redwood Bar & Grill**

IPO is a touring festival that sees a massive selection of pop/power-pop/rock & roll bands carefully placed on a series of, honestly, quite spectacular bills at the intimate Redwood. This year's event kicks off on Friday with a night headlined by Chris Price and also featuring Rock Hromadka, Jason Berk & the Jerks, the Bings, Adrian Bourgois, and David Philp. And that's just the first night! Check out the listings and pick at least one — it's well worth the effort. *7 p.m. on Friday, August 4 through Saturday, August 12 at the Redwood, \$10 per show, theredwoodbar.com*

**Olivia O'Brien The Echo**

Los Angeles-based singer/songwriter Olivia O'Brien is on a clear upwards trajectory. By the end of 2022, she had reached over 2 billion global streams, and she released her third "micro" mixtape, A Means to an End. "A Means To An End is about navigating relationships (both romantic and platonic) as a young adult. In 'Gone Girl,' I talk about being unhappy with the life I've created for myself and the superficiality of it all... when you just want to run away and start over, but you're afraid to lose everything," she said, which just about says it all. *7 p.m. on Thursday, August 10 at he Echo, \$40+, theecho.com. [📍]*

# PEE-WEE HERMAN STAR PAUL REUBENS DIES AT 70

After secretly battling a 6-year bout with cancer, Paul Reubens died on Sunday, July 30, at the age of 70.

BY ISAI ROCHA



**P**aul Reubens, best known for his portrayal of Pee-wee Herman, reportedly died Sunday at the age of 70.

The announcement was made Monday through Reubens' Facebook page, noting a longtime battle with cancer.

"Last night we said farewell to Paul Reubens, an iconic American actor, co-

median, writer and producer whose beloved character Pee-wee Herman delighted generations of children and adults with his positivity, whimsy and belief in the importance of kindness," the post said. "Paul bravely and privately fought cancer for years with his trademark tenacity and wit. A gifted and prolific talent, he will forever live in the comedy pantheon and in our hearts as a treasured

friend and man of remarkable character and generosity of spirit."

Reubens had been battling cancer for six years, according to the post, which included a prepared message from the actor, apologizing for keeping his diagnosis from the public.

"Please accept my apology for not going public with what I've been facing the last six years," Reubens said in the posthumous message. "I have always felt a huge amount of love and respect from my friends, fans and supporters. I have loved you all so much and enjoyed making art for you."

Through the "Pee-wee Herman Show," "Pee-wee's Playhouse," and "Pee-wee's Playhouse," Reubens portrayed the character from 1981-1991. In 2010, Reubens resurrected the "Pee-wee Herman Show," doing shows at Club Nokia in Los Angeles.

After the sudden announcement of his passing, the entertainment industry and friends of Reubens paid shared their heartbreak, including actor Corey Feldman, who said he had recently spoken with him.

"We just spent my birthday texting each other back n forth all day," Feldman tweeted. "He never indicated he was even sick! A genius, groundbreaking comedian."

Reubens is survived by his sister, Abby Rubinfeld and brother Luke Rubinfeld.

## EMMY AWARDS DELAYED DUE TO STRIKING WRITERS AND ACTORS

The 75th annual Primetime Emmy Awards will be postponed due to the Hollywood writers and actors strike.

The awards show was scheduled for September 18, with the Creative Arts Emmys scheduled for September 9 and 10 and a replacement date has not been announced as of this writing.

Vendors and producers were reportedly told the event would be delayed.

The Writers Guild of America (WGA) has been on strike since May 1, while the Screen Actors Guild- American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA) went on strike on July 14, as neither could reach new contract agreements with major studios represented by the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP).

Since then, there have been attempts at government intervention, with the Los Angeles City Council introducing a motion that would call on the writers and production companies to continue negotiations. California Gov. Gavin Newsom also offered to personally mediate negotiations. The White House also held a listening session for the "responsible" use of artificial intelligence (AI), with members of the WGA and SAG-AFTRA attending, as AI has been a key factor in their nego-

tiations with production companies.

"We are going to win this fight," actress and SAG-AFTRA member Shari Belafonte said during a July 27 rally outside of Fox studios. "Just like we did in the 'Me too' movement we are the ones who set the standards for what will work. We need to set the example for all humankind."

As of this writing, there has been no indication that negotiations have continued from either the WGA or SAG-AFTRA.

"Right now, we discussed what it would cost if it went for six months, so we're looking for the long haul," SAG-AFTRA president Fran Drescher said at the start of the actors' strike. "The gravity of a commitment like this is not lost on any of us. It's major. But we also see that we have no future and no livelihood unless we take this action, unfortunately."

## BRONNY JAMES DISCHARGED FROM HOSPITAL AFTER CARDIAC ARREST

Bronny James, son of Lakers star LeBron James was discharged from the hospital after suffering a cardiac arrest during USC basketball practice on July 24.

The 18-year-old was treated on-scene and then rushed to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, where he spent a stint in the intensive care unit, before being stable enough to be placed in general care.

"Thanks to the swift and effective response by the USC athletics' medical staff, Bronny James was successfully treated for a sudden cardiac arrest," a statement from Cedars-Sinai Medical Center read. "He arrived at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center fully conscious, neurologically intact and stable. Mr. James was cared for promptly by highly-trained staff and has been discharged home, where he is resting. Although his workup will be ongoing, we are hopeful for his continued progress and are encouraged by his response, resilience, and his family and community support."

Days later, LeBron James gave an update on Bronny, thanking fans for their concern and support.

"I want to thank the countless people sending my family love and prayers," James said in a July 27 social media post. "We feel you and I'm so grateful. Everyone doing great. We have our family together, safe and healthy, and we feel your love. Will have more to say when we're ready but I wanted to tell everyone how much your support has meant to all of us."

James then posted a video of his son at home and playing the piano, giving an indication that he is well and saying, "We're here right with you every step of the way."

It is not clear if and when the highly-touted USC basketball star can resume team activities. **[E]**

FOOD

# GIRLS NIGHT OUT? GO COUCOU AND GET YOUR GOAT

BY MICHELE STUEVEN



Goat liver mousse at The Girl & The Goat (Michele Stueven)



Fideus Rossejats and Cluïsses at Flor y Solera (Michele Stueven)

Even if you can't make it to Spain, France, or the rolling hills of Tuscany this summer, there are plenty of escapes for a girl's night out in L.A. to make you feel like you're on vacation. Whether it's sharing plates or your deepest secrets, *Coucou*, *The Girl & The Goat* and *Flor y Solera* are all a girl's best friend for a night out.

The lively new Spanish tapas bar in the Los Angeles Arts District, *Flor y Solera* is the newest restaurant from Factory Place Hospitality Group, with a menu inspired by Spain's 17 regions. Helmed by Catalan-born Chef Mónica Angelats and Beverage Director Francine Diamond-Ferdinandi,

the menu features sharable tapas, mains and desserts alongside a standalone sherry bar. It's the holy grail for tempranillo fans, stocking an exclusive variety of the smooth reds. The Andalusian fortified wine is offered by the glass, flight or with special tapas pairings.

Dip into a dainty and traditional Spanish gazpacho with garlic and almonds from the tapas menu, a potato omelet tortilla or eggplant and pepper toast with anchovies. Both the *Fideus Rossejats* and *Cluïsses*, a South Catalan toasted noodle dish similar to paella for two with garlic aioli and the Iberico pork shoulder with sweet potato puree and celery salad are not

to be missed. Round off a night of gossip with a traditional *Torta de Santiago* almond cake served with a one-ounce pour of Pedro Ximenez boutique sherry.

Also in the bustling downtown arts district, Top Chef's first female winner Stephanie Izard's indoor/outdoor *Girl & The Goat* is a comfy staycation that feels like it's miles away from the city. Bright and airy, the easy atmosphere is a delightful spot for spilling the beans over some goat liver mousse with buttery crumpets, craisin relish and pickled green strawberries.

The goat, as a symbol of greatness, has historical and cultural roots. In ancient

cultures, they were often associated with strength, virility and fertility, and were believed to have magical powers. Plus, they're really cute. Intent on the mixture of textures and inclusion of fruits in savory dishes, the Chicago native's menu celebrates the spiritual animal, with shareable plates like chickpea fritters with goat yogurt, confit goat belly with pickled blueberry vinaigrette and goat neck with a poblano strawberry relish. There are several vegan options, as well as shrimp salad with crispy greens, and strawberries covered in a blanket of crunchy pepitas in a lime dressing. Don't miss the mango tamarind ice cream with a pickled green mango cloud and watermelon granita for dessert.

*Coucou*, the buzzy new French bistro in Venice on Main Street, is a snug and safe harbor for chatter, mussels *marinière* and a good stiff martini from the cozy bar in the historic shotgun building space. There are classics like steak frites and tartare, as well as a veggie French dip made with oyster mushrooms, housemade Boursin cheese and arugula on a baguette. For wagging tongues, the *L'Haute Dog* comes with Peads and Barnetts pork sausage, holy cow fondue, French onion marmalade, spicy mustard and pickled peppers on a sourdough roll.

A former art gallery, the space features exposed brick and steel paneled windows with hints of oxidized patina, a female-friendly board-formed concrete bar with a triple-arched wooden *barbac*, and a custom banquette with cognac leather booths. More than 30 pieces of framed artwork dot the walls, highlighting independent and emerging local artists like photographer David Kitz and illustrator Adam Villacin. French globe pendants hang above the bar and Belgian-washed linen cafe curtains frame the front windows, which open up accordion-style to Main Street to a soft ocean breeze. Each intimate table has its own miniature, shaded lamp for leaning in and catching up. 🐐

MUSIC

# HOME FREE!

After a rough year, Regina Spektor hits the Greek

BY BRETT CALLWOOD



A conversation with singer and songwriter Regina Spektor, even one within the confines of a professional interview experience, is very likely to leave you with the “warm and fuzzies.” Her gift for conveying warmth, honesty, humor and heartbreak in her lyrics carries over into her back-and-forth, so even a 20-minute phone call left us with the impression (at least) that we’d really gotten to know her a little. Obviously, you can’t get to know anyone, let alone a celebrated musician, during a 20-minute phone call, but such is her gift.

Russian-born American artist Spektor released her *Home, Before and After* album about a year ago, six years after the *Remember Us to Life* album. Spektor says that it was warmly received – fans were singing along to the new songs very early in the touring process – which was a bit of a relief because, for obvious reasons, this one was recorded a little differently.

“That one was made super-duper pandemic style,” Spektor says. “It’s my first ever experience working remotely in that way. I was assured by John Congleton, who produced it, that people have been doing it forever. But I’m just so used to being in the studio and so hands-on, so just there for hours and hours in real time. It’s quite a learning curve, but in the end I was grateful to have this new experience. It turned out really fun.”

Spektor, pregnant during the COVID peak, was understandably extra careful. So she ran away to a converted church and recorded under conditions that allowed her to breathe her own air.

“I was the only person in there,” she says. “It was the ideal pandemic thing, where you’re in a place that could fit an entire congregation, and you’re the only person in there. You’re definitely not going to share air with anyone. So I actually was very careful and I didn’t ever set foot

into the control room even. It was such an interesting, super-wild experience. But it was also kinda, I would do the tracking and the takes very much in my own world and then have this back-and-forth with John, who’s a very good communicator. He really put up with all my tediousness. He was patient and kind. Then we had all this amazing orchestration done with Jherik Bischoff and he was patient and kind. It was a very good exercise for me to

be able to open it up and allow myself some time to not just have knee jerk reactions, which I reluctantly admit that I do. I’m an accidental tyrant sometimes, when it comes to music.”

The approach did lead to some challenges; while recording an orchestra in Macedonia, an earthquake in that nation resulted in a four-hour blackout. Thankfully everyone was OK, and the show went on. You might think that all of the chaos would find its way onto the album, at least lyrically. But that’s not how Spektor works.

“I don’t write specific songs for specific records,” she says. “I just write songs as I live my life, and they accumulate. It’s almost like, every time it’s time to start making a record, through whatever strange process, I lay out everything from the newest things I’ve writ-

ten to the oldest things that maybe have never been on a record, and some are always asking their turn from their Island of Forgotten Toys, and a lot of that has to do with people who come to the shows and start requesting certain songs that maybe live only in live versions online. They come back into my consciousness for whatever reason. I really put everything out there and see what feels right in that moment. I’m more of a fiction writer, so I really love fairy tales and stories and made-up things. Different characters and perspectives.”

When looking back over the year since the album’s release, Spektor concedes that she doesn’t have a good sense of time. That said, this year was particularly difficult, as she lost her dad.

“I think I’m still attempting to just make it through to grasp that,” she says. “I’m so happy to be with my family, to be emerging and be with people again, and

having this joyous post-COVID time where you can play shows again and be together again, and at the same time it has all been combined with growing through this grief over and over again. From what I understand, that just goes on. I don’t really think that you emerge from it ever, it just shifts into something else over and over again.”

Spektor is playing two very different venues in SoCal – the Greek Theatre in L.A. and House of Blues in Anaheim. The artist says that she likes to mix it up to avoid Groundhog Day.

“I realized years ago, I like to have a mix of venues,” she says. “I did a tour once where it was all beautiful, pristine theaters which I love, but it starts to feel crazy-making. I think my ideal tour is, you get an incredible theater and you feel like you’re royal, and then you play a less-frills club. Basically different sizes and vibes. That helps me when I’m out on the road. It’s important not to have a *de ja vu* experience. That keeps it alive and surprising.”

If you are planning on attending both, be prepared for a different set each night. For Spektor, the whole thing is fluid.

“My crew laughs at the idea of a setlist,” she says. “I do write them out each night, and they’re always slightly different, but in the end I never follow them. I use them as a jump-off point, but then I follow my own instincts about what feels good. It’s like a *Make Your Own Adventure* story. A lot of the time, I’ll ask people online what songs they want to hear in what cities. The special thing about playing live with people is that you’re all there in that moment, and that’s the only moment you’re going to have. In a world where there are many things that are on rails, it’s really wonderful to be together and just say fuck it. There’s an element of danger, but at the same time, compared to brain surgery or open heart surgery, what’s the worst that can happen? I’m not endangering anybody’s life.”

As for the next record, Spektor is doing her usual thing and accumulating songs as she goes through life.

“One of the things that I’ve accepted about myself is that the byproduct of me being in the world is that I make songs,” she says. “So at certain moments, I’ll just write one here and there. That’s always happening. But I did promise myself after this last record, when I realized that it had been six years since the previous record, that that’s way too long and whatever I do next is not going to take that long. I’ll try to take that snail’s pace to maybe a turtle’s pace.”

Phew!

*Regina Spektor’s Home, Before and After* album is out now. She performs at the Greek Theatre on Aug. 10 with Aimee Mann. [A]





# PARTY PRESERVATION

With *Faustian Society*, *Beauty of Burlesque* and more, The Globe Theatre Brings Back Nightlife's Wicked Whimsy

BY LINA LECARO

**L**.A. NIGHTLIFE is as vast and varied as ever in terms of themes, scenes and sounds. Post pandemic, people who like to party – in public with strangers, that is – have many choices. A lot of us might not go out as much as we used to, but when we do, we want a real scene, with lots to look at and an immersive environment that feels special. Again and again, the Globe Theatre in downtown is fulfilling our most grandiose party proclivities. The 110-year-old building has quite a history as a landmark, but its recent history as a place for glamorous hedonism and dressed-up (and nearly undressed) events is what's kept us coming back for more.

Remodeled and reopened as part of the “Bringing Back Broadway” initiative aimed at revitalizing downtown and in particular, Broadway between Third to Ninth streets, the Globe has continued to be one of the most consistently active spaces in the area ever since. Booking unique events that run the gamut, from the epic Halloween haunts of horror drag duo The Boulet Brothers to the thematic fetes of the Faustian Society to strip tease extravaganzas by Beauty of Burlesque, it's a unique place to escape daily doldrums and dance/drink the night away.

## BROADWAY, BROUGHT

Originally an opulent playhouse called the Morosco, the building became a movie theater after the depression. It was designed by the same architectural firm that created the Mayan, Wiltern, and El Capitan, but its beauty was hidden and wasted away as it housed indoor swap meets for many years. After he purchased it in 2017, current owner Erik Chol, sought to return it to its former splendor, working on a lot of the restoration himself, which he says had multiple challenges. “Remodeling a historic theater while respecting all the city code compliances was

very complicated,” he tells LA Weekly. “The Los Angeles Historic Theatre Foundation (LAHTF) was a great support and sharing with them the same passion for this 1913 historic theater helped us to go through all those challenges.”

In addition to LAHTF, groups such as the Los Angeles Conservancy and the Broadway Theatre Group also had a hand in helping not just the Globe, but the entire area, which also includes legendary spaces like the Ace and the Orpheum. Back in its heyday, Broadway was a mecca for vibrant neon marquees, boasting top films and performers at movie palaces built between 1910 and 1931. Added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1979, it was the first and largest historic theater district, with the highest concentration of cinemas in the world at one time.

Jose Huizar, the city councilmember who first helmed the initiative focused on revitalizing The Broadway Theatre District has left local government – he's currently awaiting charges in a major corruption case concerning bribes and tax evasion – but his attention to the area remains at least one positive aspect of his legacy. Still, while improvements were made during the 10-year drive, the area's growth felt a bit stunted and unrealized not long afterward. The annual “Night On Broadway” event was an exception. “It was every year in January,” Chol says. “It was a fantastic opportunity for all the historic theaters on Broadway to share their unique and magical atmosphere with the public.” Sadly, that event was canceled in 2018 after Huizar's legal troubles became public, and postponed during COVID's height. It has yet to return.

## A ROOM WITH VA VA VOOM

The Globe was the first venue this nightlife reporter attended out of the COVID lockdown and it gave

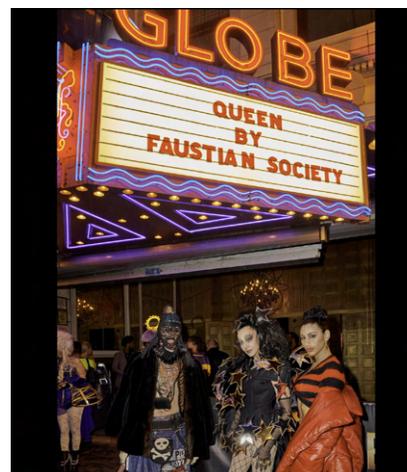


us hope that things really might return to normal. Wearing masks and making efforts to stay “socially distanced” (a term that already feels antiquated, thankfully), we attended a sexy seated event to venture back out. Beauty of Burlesque, produced by dancer/producer Miss Tosh, boasts high-production value spectacle with local and out-of-town performers at the top of their bump and grind, elevated by props, blindingly beautiful costumes and innovative lighting.

“The Globe Theater holds a special place in my heart,” Tosh tells us. “It is where my great-great grandmother Maz-

ie Evans, a talented burlesque variety performer, graced the stage in 1922. In 2019, I founded my own show with the intention of honoring my family’s legacy and preserving the art of burlesque. My ultimate goal is to create an authentic burlesque ‘varietease’ experience that not only pays homage to the past but also looks towards the future.”

Beauty of Burlesque touts “empowerment, self-expression, and body positivity” and sees the artform in general as a platform to embrace individuality and challenge societal norms. And it’s not the only promotion that seems based on this



philosophy.

“We’re hosting all types of events at the Globe Theatre – corporate events, fundraisers, weddings, concerts, fashion shows...” says Chol. “We’re also very involved with the LGBTQ+ community as we host events like Boulet Brothers parties and GPS.”

When asked about some of the Globe’s most memorable events, Chol points to Bryan Rabin’s “Giorgio’s” anniversary party – a special offshoot of the weekly disco at the now-gone Standard Hotel on Sunset Strip (the club just returned in its smaller form to Grandmaster Records). “It was an unforgettable event with

Giorgio Moroder, one of the most iconic producers in history, deejaying for his birthday celebration.”

When we think back to the countless events we’ve covered over the years, big and bodacious stuff comes to mind – warehouse raves like Willy Wonka’s, Double Hit Mickey’s and the early club incarnation of Electric Daisy Carnival in the early ‘90s; goth, drag and glam gatherings such as Club Makeup, Coven 13 and Dragstrip 66 in the early 2000s, along with annual events like Fetish Ball, Bondage Ball and Club Massive at the Hollywood Athletic Club and Variety Arts Center; electronic parties Giant and Spundae at now gone Arena and Circus discos; “indie sleaze” soirees at Cine-space, Safari Sams and A Club Called Rhonda in the later 2000s.

Gatherings that capture a thematic, theatrical feel aren’t soon forgotten. Themed nights call for dressing up, planning, pre-gaming and generally turning a simple jaunt out into a special occasion. Sustaining a weekly dance club promotion is not easy, but a lot of the less frequently held happenings created a special kind of anticipation and something to look forward to.

### SUBVERSIVE SOCIETY

In this spirit, the multi-media celebrations of the Faustian Society have made their mark in Los Angeles. Held exclu-



sively in L.A. at the Globe, the affairs bring to mind the mixed crowds, wild and wondrous outfits, and overall atmospheric curation of our all-time favorite nightlife. Doing events for a combined 30 years, Faustian's visionaries come from backgrounds in music and production, from Black Mass in London to star-studded soirees at the Cannes Film Festival.

At their "Queen" event back in February, New York nightlife figures Susanne Bartsch, Amanda Lepore and Joey Arias were flown in to host, while a latex fashion show by Black Licorice saw sultry gals of all sizes prance the stage in glistening, body molded get-ups. DJs spun electro, glam and dance vibes as the floor filled up with fanciful fits and frocks, all inspired by that night's theme. There are "queens" of all sorts, after all, and nightlife fashion is its own form of "drag." Many interpreted the theme literally, donning white powdered wigs and corsets, a la Bridgerton, while others took the opportunity to channel their inner royal with various crowns, scepters and big fancy jewels and capes.

It was one of the rainiest nights of the year, complete with blackouts throughout Los Angeles, but revelers came out in full regalia. And by the way, the venue has a parking lot right next door – an essential component for any club or event that invites outlandish looks.

"We want people to dress to excess for that night, to come with friends and lovers and build that experience with us,"

says Faustian's Isabel Grigor. "We are our audience and we're only as good as them, so we reflect that joy, exuberance and joie de vivre back at them. These are the nights to remember forever and we create that playground for one night only."

Grigor's husband and business partner Paul Faust adds that the Globe has been instrumental in helping them implement their ideas. "We do events at the Globe because it is by far the greatest independent venue in California, if not the world," he says. "The Globe incorporates old school Hollywood glamor with one of the most up-to-date and modern sound and lighting and FX systems in the country, and they work with and showcase new and independent and avant-garde producers such as ourselves who are looking to push the envelope and create new and unique experiences."

Joining forces with legendary fetish night Torture Garden (TG), Faustian Society is indeed pushing boundaries. We covered the BDSM bacchanal in London (as well as its L.A. one-offs back in the '90s), and the evening in the UK still tops our list as one of the most eye-poppingly weird and wicked nights we've ever experienced, with fantastical club kid/creature and kink looks everywhere, a dungeon, live spankings and suspension performances, and pulsating music.

Faust was similarly taken aback by the bash when he had attended it in the UK in '90s. When he moved to LA in 2008, he had the idea of bringing TG to L.A. and



then more of America, so he and Isabel reached out to the TGUK team (David Wood, Charlotte Heti and Allen Pelling). "We realized the US and especially L.A. has a slightly different aesthetic to the UK and so we created more of a Hollywood show complete with the TG elements most beloved (the dungeon, etc.) and fitted the concept to what was more acceptable for US laws and the laws of each state."

The pair have struck a perfect balance of sensual liberation and artistic production with their TG events. And these days, with the queer and fetish community more out in the open, it all feels very organic, inclusive and of course, sex-positive. "All of the events are financed by Faustian and TG, so it's all private money that goes into every show," Faust says. "Once we were a success in L.A., we expanded into Las Vegas, New York and San Francisco, and aim to expand into many US and Canadian cities, too, in the future."

#### GLOBAL GLITZ

"We're now finishing the installation of a new technical layout of the Globe Theatre," Chol, who is French (he also owns the Lou Lou bistro in Santa Monica), shares of his increasingly popular downtown venue. "Our goal is to offer the best and the most impressive production ever (in) the second part of this year."

He just installed a brand new laser show, adding to the building's ability to create interactive environments with lights, sound and fluid set-ups, part of what keeps some of the city's most cutting-edge promoters coming back to the historic space. The underground dance party called Heav3n (which regularly throws events at 1720) just had its Pride party there, while Endless Nights Vampire Ball painted the place red, figuratively of course, just out of the pandemic. Midnight Soul's Tiki Noire, held a couple weeks ago at the Globe,

offered island decor, tiki drinks, photo ops, music and burlesque. The Oddities Flea Market from New York (returning in October) is another one of our favorite events at the theater. Coming up this month: the Hard Summa festival's Wunderground EDM pre-party and India Fest celebrating Indian Independence Day.

Beauty is still one of the biggest and best events for strip tease in town (Miss Tosh's magical unicorn ride under rainbow prisms is burned into our brains forever), and we like seeing a cross-pollination of performers when we visit the Globe. Tosh walked in the last Faustian fashion show we saw, for example. The dancer and model, who also throws events at Black Rabbit Rose and Bar Lis, says she loves collaborating closely with the Globe team for her larger shows. "I have been able to bring innovative lighting and technological experiences to the burlesque stage... blending the old and the new, I hope to keep the spirit of burlesque alive and captivate audiences for generations to come," she enthuses.

Broadway may not be "back" in the way it was envisioned when Chol took over the Globe six years ago, but his bookings have created their own welcoming after dark world of whimsy and excitement. Harkening back to simpler times even while it stays competitive with LED walls, Special FX and a world class acoustic sound system, Chol's goal "honor the past and celebrate the future," is realized weekly.

"The Globe has its own unique vibe, its own presence," adds Faust, who just threw an anime-inspired event there called Diesuki, and just announced the next Torture Garden event coming in November." It has an ambience that you can feel even when it's empty – it's soaked into the walls and encompasses years of L.A. joy and decadence. "

*The Globe Theatre, 740 S. Broadway, Downtown Los Angeles. More info at [globetheatre-la.com](http://globetheatre-la.com)*

ART

# CHOREOGRAPHERS BOBBI JENE SMITH AND OR SCHRAIBER EXPLORE TOGETHERNESS

BY SHANA NYS DAMBROT



PHOTOS BY JOSH S. ROSE FOR L.A. DANCE PROJECT, 2023

For dancers and choreographers Bobbi Jene Smith and Or Schraiber, life has become a long and lovely pas de deux. After their overlapping years with legendary Batsheva Dance Company, they've pursued a multitude of independent performance and pro-

duction projects — like the stunning dance film *Aviva*, a host of innovative movement works with dance and music companies around the world, and a beautiful young daughter. The pair, both in their own work and in their collaborations, is known for their uniquely expressive language of movements,



which range from the bright and angular to the jaunty and syncopated, natural and stylized, intensely emotional, muscular, sensual, witty, graceful, moody, seemingly spontaneous, and always unexpected.

They've been closely associated with internationally acclaimed, intentionally accessible company L.A. Dance Project (LADP) as well — and it's there that they are currently in the throes of creation on their latest collaborative work, which will have its premiere in September. L.A. Weekly caught up with the pair between sessions to talk about the new piece, navigating collaboration, and what ties it all together.

**L.A. WEEKLY:** *Thank you so much for letting me watch last week's rehearsal — it was really illuminating. Watching the whole company be fully present, engaged with what other performers were thinking through, working things out with you both and each other before putting all the pieces together. It seemed so collaborative and organic, and yet it's your vision, your ideas, and you are both dancers used to expressing yourselves directly in movement. So what comes first when you go to build a whole original work from the ground up?*

**BOBBI JENE SMITH:** Well, I think for me, it feels like the people always come first. I'm always kind of trying to understand the elements in the room and the different combinations of artists that are there, and trying to then create an atmosphere or to create a circumstance that would bring these people together. So even if that's like a dreamscape or a landscape or a scenario or a song, you meet at a dinner party and crazy things happen, or they all meet in this one dream and they never see each other again. It starts there. Because I feel like we all can em-

pathize with that. We all kind of understand and we can all get lost in what it is to dream and then to forget. And that's what I love so much about contemporary dance, is how it feels.

**LAW:** *I love that answer because it's almost counterintuitive. One could imagine you saying, well, I read this short story or I heard this song or it's about my parents or my divorce or, climate change or human rights — and then you'd start building it to serve that. But what I hear you saying is that it's almost the opposite.*

**BJS:** It's like almost trying to create enough space so people can fill in all of those things they need to. But, you know, trying to do that, it comes from a very personal place. But then it can also go very universal in a sense of letting people come towards it. It's like saying come, come with us. You know how to do this. You have all the tools. You don't need to know anything else.

**LAW:** *How much input do the performers have as it takes shape? Because I know the cast often changes and that's another thing — knowing that in works like *Quartet for Five* and a number of other LADP pieces, that the cast often changes. So how does that all come out?*

**BJS:** So many things start to get decided in the room without trying to make a decision. Certain people gravitate to each other. Certain people don't. Certain people have conflict or tension that's healthy and important. Rather than saying, we need this. How can you give us this? We tried to just say, like, what is there already? Who's here? And then trying to amplify and play with volume and — oh, this person tends to do this. Let's try to turn that up. Or could we oppose that? And then just play with the options.

**OR SCHRAIBER:** I think it's also connected to what Bobbi said about the fact that the cast will always be — or the people in the room will always be — the people who inform the piece. So there is a piece and if there is another cast all of a sudden, which happens all the time, the piece morphs, the piece changes and the piece is alive. And that's kind of like one of the goals, actually. And then in terms of our process of working together, I think we're still finding that every piece is different. In terms of roles, it varies all the time. We talk a lot. We argue a lot. We keep on brainstorming all the time. Constantly. We go home after the studio, in the car on the way home. It's like in the middle of the night, first thing in the morning before saying good morning. It's like a constant. Hey, wake up! I personally love it. It's very intense and the frequency is like the highest it can be.

**BJS:** And I think for this process, it's been interesting because we started our

residency at LADP with the idea of trying to recreate an older piece called Lost Mountain. And in doing so, it started to morph into a new piece, which I love. And a part of me was like, you knew that was going to happen. It has elements from another older work called Caldera and from the sister piece Lost Mountain, and now it becomes a trilogy with this new work. Caldera was a place that the people never got out of. It was a space that they were stuck in. Lost Mountain was a place they passed through. And this piece now, Lost Mountain II, they begin being stuck, but eventually, they leave. And I like those three different ways around it, and how there are elements of both of those earlier pieces coming back and finding new expressions inside this piece, but then there are brand new elements that are so specific to the people in it now, and where Or and I are at in our lives now.

**OS:** So maybe there is a narrative, but it's not a linear narrative. It's not like a story. It's a different way of looking at plots or at characters.

**BJS:** We all know what it's like, trying to listen really closely to those small moments that we all recognize in our own lives. Like that one look that changed, that made you decide the big decision? How can we fall in love with someone and then be also upset by the choices they make and then love them again? And how can we kind of put all of those little moments into this piece — the ones that maybe we missed when they were happening. Or when we look back on it, we think, Oh, that was the thing. Or it becomes kind of outsized in retrospect. What would have been different if he hadn't gotten there right then, or that song had or had not come on, or the letter was or was not delivered...

**LAW:** *Is it hard for you to not just do it yourselves?*

**OS:** That's an amazing question. I don't know. It's like this question has like five, 15 million questions within it. Yes. For me, yes. I sometimes, especially when I see, you know, the camaraderie and the togetherness and the listening and the connection of the people who are performing or just doing a run. I'm not only talking about performance, doing a run in the studio or running one section, and I'm sitting and seeing it from outside. It's like I have this urge in me, I want to charge. I want to go and be there with them. I want to feel what they feel. And so I'm assuming that's proof of them doing the right thing in the right way! Because they're really conveying something. You know, I played soccer for many years and sitting on the bench was really tough for me because you always want to go in, not just from a place of showing off your skills, but also to be there for your team-



mates. And it's something that I always have in mind when other people are doing our pieces, yeah, I always want to go and support from inside, even just sitting on a sofa, not necessarily dancing, just be there with them and for them.

**BJS:** I mean, I feel like each case is so different. And it's also what the place is, what the circumstance is. I find both roles really informative and that they feed each other. I hope that we're always going to be dancing and still connected. To show up for performances is a really important thing because I feel like it keeps us close to the dancers and it always keeps things in check like, Yes this is hard. It takes a lot of strength and it's amazing and it's fun and the more you give, the more it will give you. That love for it, I think it really is powerful and yes, it's also really hard to be in it and to be outside of it at the same time.

But I also have to say, that exchange with the dancers, for me, I find that so precious. I feel like each one of them brings themselves. Seeing how people

bring themselves to what we do makes things much larger than we could ever be without them.

There's one part in the new piece, we call it The Hopeful Parents. And it's taken from an older piece we made when we were expecting our daughter and I was pregnant and we made that duet. And, you know, before coming to L.A., I don't think we'd ever have thought about doing it with someone else. You know, it felt so personal. It was like only Or and Bobbi can do it. I remember people even saying that about us. Yeah, it was made at a specific time. It's very private and personal. But it gives me so much joy to see them do it now. And they do it amazingly. And I feel like they do it better than we did it. And they bring other colors and more life to it. And that feels incredible, too.

**LAW:** *I am curious about your relationship to music, partly because your taste is so omnivorous, right? Like there'll be western canon of classical right next to niche singer/songwriters that I can barely find online. So how and when does music*

*become a part of it?*

**BJS:** I feel like it's different for each piece. Each piece has its own musical journey. Sometimes the music was given to us. This piece is commissioned. We stick to it. We try to find the world of it. We try to justify why it's there. I think of trying to use music as a character in itself, like, what's the music of this room? Almost thinking of it as tone of the room, of the dream, of the space. Are there interruptions? Is it like the radio was turned on? What song would this character listen to? I love to think about things like, you know what if Tom Waits and Connie Converse and Nina Simone all could meet, and they're in that dream, and how can we create different meetings of music in our pieces? And then the pure idea of what gets people dancing. What sounds familiar. I love playing with what sounds familiar to an audience and how that lets people go in further, opens emotions and helps them let go.

**OS:** The composer that we're working with, except for the excerpt you heard, he's going to make the room tone that Bobbi spoke about. His name is Yonatan Daskal. He's a dear collaborator of ours. We've worked on various pieces in the past. He's just amazing.

**LAW:** *But also, too, when you are working with, say, a classical piece, but you're thinking about movement in a contemporary way. So what is that space like? Like, does it pull you back into your classical training? Do you have to fight against that? Those rhythms weren't necessarily made for how we move today. Or were they?*

**OS:** I love putting on like the Bach cantatas and seeing where our movement collides. And I find that collision really interesting, of where our bodies are now with the sound from then and, and how maybe it brings out other things in the music or it makes my body do different things that I wouldn't normally do. I love that relationship and how it brings out, you know, younger versions of myself or much older versions of myself. Many times I love making movements to silence, so I don't have any beat or groove or meter in my head because I go OCD. It's the collision, like Bobbi said, the collision of sound and movement, all of the different grooves and rhythms all of a sudden are so out there for me and so odd in a way that really turns me on. It creates a whole different emotion than what I created without the music. And that just baffles me every time. And it's amazing.

*The evening-length work will be shown for six performances only: Sept. 14, 15, 16 & 28, 29, 30 in Downtown Los Angeles. Find out more and get your tickets now (it will sell out fast): [ladanceproject.org](http://ladanceproject.org).*

# LA WEEKLY CLASSIFIEDS

## EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

**Senior Software Engineer (Beverly Hills, CA):** Responsible for the code, design, and delivery of software. Telecommuting within the US is permitted. \$147,410 - \$155,000/yr. Resumes to: John Burkle, HR, Live Nation Worldwide, Inc., 325 N. Maple Dr., Beverly Hills, CA, 90210.

**Senior Designer (Multiple Openings) (Los Angeles, CA):** Render and create technical two and three-dimensional images of a proposed architectural design. Salary: \$78,395/yr. Resumes: HR, AUX Office Inc. DBA AUX Architecture, 910 S. Olive St., Los Angeles, CA, 90015.

**Quality Engineer (Beverly Hills, CA):** Improve quality, speed up QA time, and consistently ship better proprietary products.

\$113,850 - \$122,900/yr. Resumes to: John Burkle, HR, Live Nation Worldwide, Inc., 325 N. Maple Dr., Beverly Hills, CA, 90210.

**Software Developer (Los Angeles, CA):** Develop and design the creation of the next generation of imaging software. Salary: \$102,544/yr. Resumes: HR, Cyber Medical Imaging, Inc. dba XDR Radiology, 11300 W. Olympic Blvd., Ste. 710, Los Angeles, CA, 90064.

**Production Supervisor:** Bachelor's Degree req. F/T. Resume to Byung Kee Song, Hera Print, Inc 5015 Pacific Blvd., Vernon, CA 90058



# LA WEEKLY Bulletin

**Injured at work?  
Workers Comp Law Firm  
READY TO HELP!**

**For a FREE consultation, please call  
310-664-9000 x 101 or text 310-849-5679  
Website : [www.workinjuryhelp.com](http://www.workinjuryhelp.com)**

**Warning:**  
Making a false or fraudulent claim is a felony subject up to 5 years in prison or a fine up to \$50,000 or double the value of the fraud whichever is greater, or by both imprisonment or fine.

*Thank you Saint Jude, Saint of the Impossible, EC*

## SECURITY GUARDS NEEDED

Rio Gentlemen's Club - 13124 S Figueroa St, Los Angeles, CA 90061 \$18 to \$20 an hour. Outside security needed for padowns, ID checks and monitoring parking lot of the club. Please contact Dave Carlson at [Rmckinney@jjmfirm.com](mailto:Rmckinney@jjmfirm.com)

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