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L.A. RECOVERS AFTER
HURRICANE HILARY

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ESSO RETURNS TO THE GREEK

FAST TIMES AT THE SAN LUIS
OBISPO MUSEUM OF ART

AUGUST 25 - 31, 2023 / VOL. 45 / NO. 42
LAWEEKLY.COM

LET'S GO TO SLO

THE KITSCHY COOL OF A DOWNTOWN SAN LUIS OBISPO GETAWAY

BY LINA LECARO



CALENDAR

GO EDITORS' PICKS

ARTS

THURSDAY, AUGUST 24

NOW Festival: Week Two at REDCAT. Vanessa Hernández Cruz's solo dance work examines the contradiction of over-consuming social media; Melissa Ferrari's experimental documentary is performed with antique magic lanterns and digitally projected hand-drawn animation; and Kevin Williamson offers a dance-based meditation on self-preservation and solidarity. With a sharp interest in rituals, fantasies and memories, these works use history and technology to formulate diverse, other-worldly futures that provide a counterpart to our reality while allowing us to examine the injustices around us. 631 W. 2nd St., downtown; Thursday-Saturday, August 24-26, 8:30pm; Saturday's performance will be live-streamed as well; \$25; redcat.org.

Allison Lu Wang: Little After Sunset at Mey Gallery. A sprawling ode to the city of angels, the presented paintings and accompanying installations are kaleidoscopic visions of a city existing at the edges of reality and imagination. Her layered dreamscapes feature iconic Hollywood landmarks and lush flora, speaking to the dichotomy of the city and resulting in worlds that are at once easily recognizable and entirely foreign. Her interdisciplinary approach to art making—a blend of printmaking, painting, and sewing—is heavily inspired by her fashion design background. 8967 Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood; Opening reception: Thursday, August 24, 6-9pm; On view through September 20; free; meygallery.com.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 25

Black Voices Poetry Night at Grand Performances. In "Return the White Breath to its Black Body: A Black Lives Matter Poetry Performance," Black voices take center stage during a special Friday evening poetry showcase curated by award-winning author/poet, Shonda Buchanan. Performers: Bridgette Bianca, Conney Williams, Nailah Porter, David Judah I, Curtis Robertson; live music by Curtis Robertson. 350 S. Grand Ave, downtown; Friday, August 25, 6-9pm; free; grandperformances.org.

Elephant Shavings at Odyssey Theatre. In this "lazy person's guide to enlightenment" written



Corey Helford Gallery
Luke Chueh
Storm Cloud

and directed by Ron Sossi, one member of a theater's acting ensemble finds herself challenged to confront the true nature of reality. A lighthearted introduction to both Eastern philosophies (Buddhism, Hinduism, Sufism), and modern Western teachers like Rupert Spira and Mooji, Elephant Shavings evolved out of

Sossi's interest in the realm of metaphysics and his lifelong quest to understand the essence of human consciousness. 2055 S. Sepulveda Blvd.; Performances August 25 - October 1; \$15; odysseytheatre.com.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 26

Luke Chueh: Peering through the Darkness at Corey Helford Gallery. Known for his insightful and thought-provoking commentary on modern society and the human experience, Chueh's distinctive style blends elements of pop art, minimalism, and surrealism in explorations of human emotions, relationships, and identity.

His work is both haunting and humorous, inviting the viewer to contemplate their own experiences and question the world around them. He tackles difficult and controversial topics such as loneliness, depression, and the meaning of existence, challenging viewers to question our place in the world and to reflect on the human experience in all its beauty, tragedy, and absurdity. *571 S. Anderson St., downtown; Opening reception: Saturday, August 26, 7-11 pm; On view through September 30; free; coreyhelfordgallery.com.*

Autumn Breon: Essentials at Crenshaw Dairy Mart. The CDM's Fellowship for Abolition and the Advancement of the Creative Economy (CDM-FAACE) presents "Inglewood & Prototyping the Abolitionist Imagination"—a three-part fellowship culmination featuring solo exhibitions by Autumn Breon, Oto-Abasi Attah, and Juice Wood. The first exhibition, Autumn Breon: Essentials comprises sculpture and video that invite the audience to interact with relics from the planet Esoterica—a planet powered by care where creativity is plentiful. Even though Esoterica is 300 light-years from Inglewood, Esotericans have activated many wormholes there, shortcuts to liberation hidden in plain sight—such as a newly arrived interactive monolith that invites the viewer to engage with the concept of care. *8629 Crenshaw Blvd., Inglewood; Opening reception: Saturday, August 26, 5-9 pm; On view by appointment through September 1; free; crenshawdairymart.com.*

SUNDAY, AUGUST 27

Dan Kwong & Paulina Sahagun: We Were All Here at 18th Street Arts Center. The launch of Artful Watching, a special series of outdoor film screenings exploring the rich history and cultural treasures of Santa Monica. The series kicks off with We Were All Here by local artists Dan Kwong and Paulina Sahagun. Weaving together the personal and the political through oral histories, historical and family photos, poetry, music and a sprinkling of irreverent humor, the film honors the multicultural history of the unique Pico Neighborhood. The film focuses on the extended Casillas family that began settling around Olympic Blvd. and 20th Street ("La Veinte") in 1918. *1639 18th St., Santa Monica; Sunday, August 27, 7 pm; free; 18thstreet.org.*

MONDAY, AUGUST 28

Still Life Club at Coaxial Arts. In something between a show & tell and potluck, artists collaborate by bringing an interesting object from home; together, the group builds a unique still life for everyone to draw. BYO: snacks, art supplies, and "any object larger than a banana (for visibility purposes)." Some examples of what to bring: pineapple, candle, rock, vase of lilies, ceramic dinosaur, goldfish bowl, beach ball, clarinet, metronome, strappy shoe, plastic water bottle, cowboy hat, trophy, half-inflated mylar balloon, cake, lamp, barrel of pretzels, picture frame, stuffed dog, etc. The event is in two sessions, *7:30-8 pm & 8:15-9ish. 1815 S. Main St., downtown; Monday, August 28, 7 pm; \$10-\$15; coaxialarts.org.*

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Environmental Sanitation Tax of \$27 Pesos per person per night will be collected by the hotel at check-out. *Rate based on double room accommodations at Riu Bambu All-Inclusive in Punta Cana. *Rate based on classic queen room accommodations at the LNO Hotel + Experience in Las Vegas. Kids stay free in same room as adults using existing bedding at Waikiki Beach Marriott Resort & Spa. Occupancy limits apply. *Riu Bambu resort credit is as follows: Valid on new bookings for travel through December 23, 2024. 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LET'S GO TO SLO

The Kitschy Cool of a Downtown San Luis Obispo Getaway

BY LINA LECARO

There are certain excursions and experiences that every pop culture vulture should have at some point in their lives, and a stay at the Madonna Inn in San Luis Obispo is definitely one of them. Known for its themed rooms and outlandish Bar-

bie-esque interiors and exteriors, the inn provides a colorful escape from the daily drudgery of a work-driven life. Planning a getaway around a stay at this iconic hotel can make for a uniquely romantic romp, a glam getaway with friends, or a singular special occasion jaunt, especially for Angelenos. In

the summer, when the weather is still comfortably cool, a charming adventure awaits in SLO, as San Luis Obispo is called, with Madonna as the must-see centerpiece.

As we've done with past travel guides to Las Vegas, San Diego and Santa Barbara, we worked with area tourism groups and the local chamber of commerce to find out what's new and what's special to traipse, taste and try near the inn, and we dug deeper, talking to locals and frequent visitors about things to see and do beyond the typical and touristy.

San Luis Obispo county is located on the central coast of California, almost exactly midway between San Francisco and Los Angeles. We're covering downtown SLO here, but we encourage readers to seek out more in the areas that surround it, especially those looking for wine tast-

ing, outdoorsy or beach activities and family-friendly fun.

With Madonna as a base camp (and a campy inspiration), we specifically highlight art, music, dining and shopping with a similarly maximalist creative flair complementing a stay at the inn. What we discovered is that SLO is a city driven by immersive amusements, community connections and a rich coastal California history.

A Rockin' Road Trip

The Madonna Inn (madonnainn.com) opened for business in 1958 and it's remained a novel destination ever since. With 110 uniquely decorated rooms, it also offers a coffee shop, steak house, bakery and a bar, as well as a pool area, gardens, tennis courts and an expo hall



for events. With Swiss dollhouse-style exterior design, stained glass, rose-printed carpets, and lots and lots of pink everywhere, it also has over-the-top restrooms including an infamous rock waterfall urinal located in the restaurant's men's laboratory.

"Anybody can build one room and a thousand like it. It's more economical. Most places try to give you as little as possible," Alex Madonna, the visionary behind the hotel, said in a famous New York Times article that helped put the place on the map with hipsters back in 1982. "I try to give people a decent place to stay where they receive more than they are entitled to for what they're paying. I want people to come in with a smile and leave with a smile. It's fun."

Indeed, fun is the point here. Each room features its own moniker, color-coordinated furnishings, real rock showers, and a gaudy ambiance that recalls Disneyland, Liberace and Graceland all rolled into one whimsical wonderland. Room names, like the "Safari," "Love Nest," "Just Heaven" and "Caveman" adorn each door. The latter, by the way, used to be called The Flintstones Room until Hanna-Barbera Productions sued Madonna in 1983 over the name. Now it's called the "Jungle Rock" suite, which was ironically paid homage in a different animated form: a 1994 episode of The Simpsons that saw Homer and Marge sleeping in it. Doh!

We just stayed in the "Mini/Maxi," a newly wallpapered space with purple glitter hues, iridescent tiled flooring and a rustic rock fireplace. It got its name during the first year of the hotel's grand opening, as guests could pay on a sliding scale starting with a set minimum rate, not exceeding a set maximum rate. Set against a mountain on the second floor of the main building, there's a shared balcony area that's perfect for sipping morn-

ing coffee with a view of SLO's majestic mountains.

Pretty in Pink

Honeymooners make up a big part of the guestbook regularly and we personally know a handful of couples who actually got married here as an alternative to Vegas chapel/Elvis officiated nuptials. Wedding receptions take place among the gold cherubs, creepy dolls, hot pink and gold retro booths and whimsical mid-century splendor of Alex Madonna's Gold Rush steakhouse and adjacent ballroom, which features a dance floor and small stage for live music. A wonderful jazz outfit played standards during our last visit, adding to the old school feel.

Though creator Alex died in 2004, his wife Phyllis, who worked on the design of the rooms with him, lives nearby. The inn is still owned by the Madonna family (who bear no relation to the superstar singer as they have different surnames... people still ask employees about this all the time, though). Phyllis wrote a book that provides a detailed history and personal recollection about the audacious aesthetic, building process and personal inspirations called Madonna Inn: My Point of View.

By the way, if you plan to celebrate anything at the Madonna, book way in advance; up to a year for the most popular rooms. And once there, you simply must do the following for the full experience:

1) Have a *Pink Cloud* – The signature cocktail is made with strawberry vodka, creme de cacao and strawberry puree, topped with whipped cream, pink sugar and the obligatory maraschino cherry, and it's as decadent as it looks, recalling a lethal tiki drink and yummy milkshake in one. Enjoy one in the gazebo by the pool next to a serene waterfall at dusk.

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2) Have a slice of *Pink Champagne Cake* – The restaurant bakery cuts portions of its beloved buttercream, pink chocolate white cake confection super thick, but flavorwise, its sweetness isn't overpowering, but balanced and creamy. Take-out orders for this one are steady but they don't ship it, so you must go there to get it. It doesn't actually contain any alcohol, but rather a splash of Brandy for the Bavarian Cream flavor. On your birthday you can get a free slice with dinner.

3) Get a *Madonna Goblet* – The rose-embossed drinking vessels serve as glassware in the inn's coffeeshop and steakhouse (and they get stolen regularly, too). You can buy them in the gift shop but don't expect to find every color you want on your next visit. Handmade in the United States by a family owned glass company,

they only put one color into production at a time, producing about 500 pieces per color. A cult-like collector following keeps track of available shades, of which pink and red seems to be the most popular. The online store offers a waiting list for the rare and in-demand shades.

Style and Sustainability

If you appreciate the vintage vibes of Madonna Inn, there are plenty of stores in town that'll strike your retro fancy in the same way. According to SLO's tourism rep, the city is driven by a strategic sustainability plan that includes its Keys for Trees program, earmarking part of local hotel revenue for the continuous planting of trees. "The goal is to have 10,000 trees planted and flourishing throughout the city by 2035, which coincides with SLO's goal of being carbon neutral," they tout.



San Luis Obispo also is the first city to utilize Hitachi Zosen Inova's state-of-the-art, high solids *anaerobic digestion* facility, converting organic waste into carbon-neutral biogas.

With this in mind, SLO offers many repurposed crafts, vintage and upcycle-heavy boutiques that are as stylish as they are treasure-filled. If you love thrifting, SLO's got a myriad of clothing stores to score previously worn gems. Check out *A Satellite of Love* (asatelliteoflove.com), with curated vintage clothes, new and used books and decor, *Central Coast Vintage* (vintageclothingsanluisobispo.com) with used mens and womens basic pieces like tees, jeans, jackets and skirts,

and *Calico Trading Co.* (calicotrading-company.com), featuring previously loved styles from the '60s-'90s.

Junk Girls (junkgirls.com) began in the owners' garage and has been featuring local artist-made decor and jewelry in its brick-and-mortar store for over a decade. From funky accessories made from silver spoons, knives and forks to hand-stamped words and graphics on repurposed brass to sculptures from discarded hardware, the shop is an inventive and imaginative oasis.

Boo Boo Records (booboorecords.com) is a music lover's delight. Founded in 1974, it's one of the oldest record shops in all of California, let alone SLO.



They've got a killer vinyl selection (new and used), tees and rockin' novelty gifts, but Boo Boo is the kind of store you just want to hang out in even if you don't buy anything. There's so much to look at and every crevice is filled with a collectable, poster or tangible music item. As Penny Lane explained in Almost Famous, record stores are where fans go to visit their friends, and Boo Boo is filled with a bounty of beloved buddies.

Looking for a new dress to wear to a Gold Rush steakhouse dinner date? Beyond vintage, the cutest '50s and '60s style frocks are found at **Hep Kat Clothing** (hepkatclothing.com), which stocks dresses that gals with a pinup girl/rockabilly flair will covet. Leopard prints, cherry prints, gingham, and all things girly and sassy are found at this bodacious boutique.

San Luis Obispo is a college town SLO Cal Poly Mustang shop

Rolling Around

While this guide focuses on city-minded endeavors versus outdoorsy ones like hikes or beach activities, we do recommend renting bikes while in town to get around. Cambria Bicycle Outfitters (cambriabike.com) has a plentiful stock of e-bikes, which allow for exercise when you want it and a little accelerated help

when you need it as you peddle and roll around town.

If you want to immerse yourself in the local community and cuisine, there's no better place to do it than SLO's weekly **Farmers' Market** (downtownslo.com), which packs Higuera street between Nipomo and Osos streets with local farmers selling produce and flowers, grill masters smoking and cooking meats of all sorts, artisans selling crafts and goods, and live entertainment like DJs and street performers. Plan your trip so you can be there Thursday and prepare for a real street scene filled with the flavors of the community that's brought people together from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., for 40 years and counting.

While you're at the outdoor market, make a quick pop into **Bubblegum Alley**, if you dare, and maybe do so before you eat. The popular photo op is basically a narrow 70-foot-long walk-thru between two buildings where hundreds, nay, thousands of people have discarded their used chewing gum (in every color imaginable) along the walls to create a bizarre sort of public art display that recalls the abstract splatter of Jackson Pollock, kinda. The odd attraction apparently started by teenagers back in the 1950s and nobody ever thought to power wash it away. 7335 Higuera St.

There's a reason **Mistura** (misturarestaurants.com) always tops the best restaurant lists in Obispo – care is taken with every dish and cocktail from presentation to flavor profile(s), which tend to be as unexpected as they are delicious. Chef Nicola Allegretta, who also owns the nearby fave Mama's Meatball, has taken the authentic Italian staples he's known for and jazzed them up with Peruvian touches (inspired by his wife's heritage) for a fun yet sophisticated fusion menu that also takes inspiration from Spanish, Chinese and Japanese cuisine.

Brunch and lunch at **Seeds** (tasteseeds.com) feels refreshingly Californian, serving juice and smoothies, alongside flatbread dishes and paninis. There's also coffee, alcohol and a nice selection of health-minded canned beverages.

One of the best outdoor patios in town, **Luna Red** (lunaredslo.com) has a menu that's equally inviting. Overlooking the San Luis Obispo Creek, they're known for paella, a variety of pizazzy tacos and sangria. Enjoy live music while dining and SLO breezes while soaking up the scene. 1023 Chorro St.

Painting the Town

For accommodations, **Madonna Inn** maintains the most popularity in the area thanks to its whimsical variety –

many book a week and change rooms each night, while others have created a checklist-driven challenge of sorts with the goal of sleeping in all 110 rooms. The first woman to do so reportedly took seven years and completed the task in 1977.

Still, visitors might want to try something different on a visit. SLO has plenty of other places to stay. **The Granada Hotel & Bistro** (granadahotelandbistro.com) is a century-old environment with exposed brick walled rooms and large picturesque windows. Formerly an auto repair garage, **The Butler Hotel** (thebutlerhotel.com) is now filled with awe-worthy art, mid-century modern furnishings and industrial chic. 1511 Monterey St. **Hotel Cerro** (hotelcerro.com) in downtown offers edible chef's gardens, a copper Holstein distillery, and a breezy rooftop pool terrace. 1125 Garden St. **SLO Brew Lofts** (slobrewlofts.com) is a good choice for short-term vacation rentals with five arty lofts located in the center of the entertainment district and its own brewery where vendors offer artisanal food and drinks, plus crafts and art.

Speaking of art, it's a huge part of SLO's appeal. The first Friday of each month, **Art After Dark** (Artsobispo.org), becomes a bonafide artist's hub with self-guided tours of exhibits and galleries in downtown, which stay open after hours and highlight local and international works utilizing a variety of mediums and creative approaches. Another great example of San Luis Obispo's attention to and celebration of art, **the SLO Museum** (sloma.org) is a must while in town, with renowned names in the art world spotlight on a regular basis. (Read our art editor's more detailed piece about the space in this print edition and online).

If you're looking for music, check out **The Fremont Theater** (fremontslo.com), a beautiful 1941 building that features touring acts weekly amid a strikingly art deco backdrop. The theater hosts everything from classic rock to jazz to comedy, and they even welcome club nights that happen in LA, like the Shrek Rave and Disney-themed DJ dance parties.

More live sounds can be found during the free summer concert series called **Concerts in the Plaza** (downtownslo.com/events/concerts). Located in the Mission Plaza area, the Friday evening events run through Sept. 8 with a different singer-songwriter showcase at 5 p.m., and a main act at 6 p.m. The shows are family friendly, offer food and drink on site, and free bike valet parking.

See an expanded version with more food, drink and things to do in the Culture section of LAWeekly.com. Special thanks to Visit San Luis Obispo for its help facilitating this story. [A]

NEWS

L.A. RECOVERS AFTER HURRICANE HILARY

While The City Of Los Angeles Managed To Avoid The Center Of Tropical Storm Hilary, Its Impacts Lead To Recovery Efforts From Flooding, Mudslides And Downed Power Lines.

BY ISAI ROCHA



Los Angeles continues to recover from the impacts of Hurricane Hilary, which made its way through Southern California as a tropical storm, bringing continuous rain and strong winds with it.

By Sunday morning, the storm's path shifted slightly east, causing its center to avoid the city of L.A., although much of the southland still felt the storm.

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass gave continuous updates throughout the weekend, alerting residents of available city resources as she activated Level 3 of the city's Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Bass also declared a state of emergency before the storm's arrival, opening up city resources to immediately respond to issues connected to the storm.

The mayor's office said it has been working on more than 1,700 calls for pothole repairs, mudflows, and fallen trees and powerlines.

"I want to thank the city family, city employees for working around the clock

to get us past this unprecedented weather situation," Bass said during a Monday press conference. "This was a coordinated collaborative approach and reports thus far indicate that as of right now, there have not been any death or significant risk of injury."

As of this writing, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power continues to work to restore power in more than 6,347 homes located around the Hollywood Hills, Hollywood Hills West, Harbor Gateway, West Hills and Brentwood.

As a precaution, the Los Angeles Unified School District postponed classes Monday, but continued normal operations by Tuesday morning.

LAPD said there were no fatal car crashes reported during the storm and as of this writing, there have been no reported storm-related deaths in L.A. County.

RETAIL THEFT TASK FORCE INTRODUCED IN LOS ANGELES

With a recent string of retail theft in Los

Angeles, Mayor Karen Bass announced the formation of a combative task force.

The Organized Retail Crime Task Force will consist of multiple law enforcement agencies, including the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, LAPD, California Highway Patrol (CHP), Glendale PD, Beverly Hills PD and Santa Monica PD. The apprehension task forces for the U.S. Marshals and FBI will also collaborate with local law enforcement.

"Our number one job is to keep Angelenos safe and to feel safe," Bass said at a press conference inside Los Angeles City Hall Thursday. "No Angeleno should feel like it is not safe to go shopping in Los Angeles. No entrepreneur should feel like it is not safe to open a business in Los Angeles."

LAPD Chief Michel Moore explained

need further assistance, we're ready with a helping hand," Newsom said in a statement. "The CHP is the proven leader in tackling organized retail theft and through this expanded partnership the agency will further assist the city in doing its job to keep Angelenos and their businesses safe."

In 2019, Newsom announced the Organized Retail Crime Task Force (ORTCF), in collaboration with CHP, and since then, the task force has recovered more than \$30 million in stolen merchandise from retail stores, investigating upward of 1,850 instances of theft, leading to more than 1,250 arrests.

"What we've seen over just the past week in the City of Los Angeles and in surrounding regions is unacceptable," Mayor Bass said. "These are not victimless crimes – especially in the case where Angelenos were attacked – through force or fear – as they did their jobs or ran errands."

Bass Criticizes Texas For Transporting Migrants Amid Storm

Mayor of Los Angeles Karen Bass criticized the Texas Governor's decision to send a bus full of migrants to Los Angeles in the midst of threats from Hurricane Hilary.

The bus arrived at Los Angeles Union Station at approximately 6:45 p.m. Monday. The city projects the bus made its way from Brownsville, Texas Sunday, as Southern California was given a tropical storm warning.

Bass accused Governor Greg Abbott of putting the asylum seeker's lives in danger and called the act "despicable."

"It is evil to endanger the lives of vulnerable migrants by sending a bus with families and toddlers on board to a city that at the time was under an unprecedented tropical storm warning," Bass said in a statement. "As I stood with state and local leaders warning Angelenos to stay safe and brace themselves for the worst of the coming storm, the Governor of Texas sent families and toddlers straight for us on a path through extreme weather conditions. If anybody understands the danger of hurricanes and thunderstorms, it's the Governor of Texas – who has to deal with this threat on an annual basis. This is a despicable act beyond politics."

The bus was the ninth sent to Los Angeles by Abbott, who vowed to continue sending migrants from the Texas border to cities around the country that have been designated as "sanctuary cities."

As was the case with the other buses that were sent to L.A., Bass activated the emergency operations center, as the city worked with local nonprofits to give aid to the migrants, helping them reconnect with family members in the U.S.

There have been more than 200 migrants transported from Texas to Los Angeles since June 14. [1]

that the task force will consist of detectives with specific experience in theft investigations and theft prevention.

"As chief of police, my primary duty is to ensure the safety and security of our community members and businesses," Moore said Thursday. "With that commitment in mind, we are taking an aggressive stance to tackle the escalating issue head-on."

Multiple thefts have occurred at stores throughout Los Angeles County, with one of the most recent occurrences at the Ksubi luxury denim store on South La Brea. A "Flash mob" of at least 10 suspects in ski masks and long sleeve clothing ransacked \$100,000 worth of merchandise before fleeing in multiple vehicles with covered license plates.

On the state level, California Gov. Gavin Newsom said he tripled the number of CHP available to assist Los Angeles and its retail theft task force.

"The state is investing hundreds of millions of dollars to crack down on organized crime and when our local partners

MUSIC

NO RULES!

Electro-pop duo *Sylvan Esso* returns to the Greek

BY BRETT CALLWOOD



The chemistry between Sylvan Esso members Amelia Meath and Nick Sanborn is immediately palpable. Not only bandmates since the project came to be 10 years ago, the pair have been married since 2016 (three years later). Clearly, they've found in each other a relationship that just works, both personally and professionally.

They bounce off of each other in conversation (which makes transcription a nightmare, but that's OK), reading their respective minds and sharing thoughts. It's a lovely, and impressive, thing to witness.

In May they released the *Live at Electric Lady* EP, featuring five orchestral versions of songs from last year's *No Rules Sandy* album, with string arrangements by Gabriel Kahane.

"When Electric Lady asked us if we wanted to do a session, we immediately thought like, 'Oh this will be a great opportunity to have full string arrangements in a studio, live. And we can do it

in a way that we like doing band recordings, where we record everything live,'" Meath says. "To have it be a true performance, a thing that is an expression in the moment. One of the best parts about the *Electric Lady* session was that we hadn't heard the string arrangements yet. So as we were recording, we were hearing the arrangements for the first time, and it was such a joy."

Sanborn says that it felt like a "musical trust fall exercise," pointing out that the entire concept that they based the session around was the open tuning they had no idea about.

"It's so rare to get to feel the expression of having a live experience that is recorded," Meath says. "To be able to have everybody in the band responding in the moment to something and having that be recorded."

All of the tracks on the EP were recorded in one or two takes, to retain that "live experience" vibe.

"It was this exercise between us and Ga-

briel," Sanborn says. "We trusted him, but we didn't know exactly what he was going to do. He was asking us more for vibe notes than musical notes. I explicitly was like, 'I'd rather you just do what you're going to do, and we don't do notes.'"

The Attacca Quartet is the string quartet that they worked with, an ensemble that Meath describes as being "deeply in line with each other."

"They were saying how refreshing it

was to be in a studio and instead of talking about precision, to just talk about the way that it felt," Meath says. "Which is usually the guiding light that we use to make music. It was so fun to get to give that to classical musicians who so frequently are trapped by the fanciness of their instrument."

The key, Meath says, was to allow moments to develop spontaneously, without crushing creativity by over-thinking.

"I can 'Larry David' about sessions pretty hard," Meath says. "So I try to never think about what I don't want to have happen. If I avoid that, everything that happens is something that I'm responding to. There's a way of accidentally crushing the creativity of a moment by being like, it's going naturally in this direction and I don't want it to, I want it to go in this place that I think is right. That can crush the spontaneity, or the gift of what it is to bring a bunch of different people in a room. You can't decide that you're the best brain."

This latest EP has landed almost a year after the release of *No Rules Sandy*, and 10 years after the group was born. Meath says that she's still excited about the future, because she doesn't know what it holds.

"I think it's difficult to have perspective on even how we sound different, because I don't listen to our records to be honest," says Sanborn. "Every time I'm confronted with that, it's wild to hear recordings. Even as an electronic band – we play stems when we play live in a lot of contexts. So I'm hearing things that were on the records, but my experience of them and the way we play them feels totally different now than it did then. Even though I don't know if I charted that linear change as it was happening. So it's tough to say. I've listened to the latest record a bunch, and to me it feels like us right now. Which is how I always want everything to feel. The synthesis of our dynamic together, at any given moment."

When we talk to the pair via Zoom, Sanborn is wearing a Grateful Dead shirt, so we ask if they endeavor to play the old songs differently each time (in true jam band fashion).

"It's weird because at the end of the day we're a pop band," Sanborn says. "If somebody knows one or two of our songs, and is coming because they love 'Die Young' or whatever, I don't want to alienate that person by playing that song in an alienating way. But I also know that there's people like me in the crowd who are maybe a little bit more weird electronic heads or like jam bands, and want to hear the thing they know but in a way that is fresh and is happening right in front of them on stage. So finding a way to hold both of those things and make the show work in both those directions is kind of the fundamental challenge of the thing. I feel like we're always changing the way we solve that problem."

Sylvan Esso isn't working on the next album just yet – they're finishing up the current tour and then they'll take a break. The forthcoming show at the Greek Theatre should be special though.

"We're doing that and then we're also playing at Pappy + Harriet's for two nights" says Sanborn. "So I think between those three shows, some L.A. friends are going to come out. That's the beauty of coming to L.A. – everyone's around. It's nice. I'll never forget running up Griffith Park, and then running back down, and in the time it had taken me to run down the hill, the fire had started last time and our show almost didn't happen. The L.A. Fire Department saved both Griffith Park and our show."

And after that?

"We'll be right into soup season," says Sanborn. "Soup season's real, man. Also, the fall in North Carolina is unparalleled. Chill in the air, break the sweaters out."

We'll take your word for it. [X]

ART

FAST TIMES AT THE SLOMA

A contemporary art museum with a long history and big ambitions

BY SHANA NYS DAMBROT



Vanessa Wallace-Gonzales
I Am Medicine
(Courtesy of SLOMA - Photo by
Heraldo Creative)

Since the 1950s, the San Luis Obispo Museum of Art (SLOMA) has grown, evolved, and thought about the future — but it never lost sight of its founding mission to support and anchor the arts community of California's Central Coast. From its downtown perch on the west end of Mission Plaza's cultural district, in its galleries and on its exterior walls public-facing grounds, SLOMA's programs, classes, concerts, films, lectures, and exhibitions combine a variety of voices, genres

and issues.

As Leann Standish, SLOMA's executive director, tells L.A. Weekly, "The museum is at a really exciting moment of engagement with our community. We are both able to curate exhibitions with artists of national and international acclaim while bringing them into our community, and present thoughtful collaborations with local, regional artists."

The San Luis Obispo Art Association was founded in the 1950s by a close



Anila Quayyum Agha
The Greys In Between
(Courtesy of SLOMA
- Photo by Heraldo
Creative)

has really leveled up," Standish says. "You can spend 15 minutes or an hour and you'll almost always see something new. Every First Friday evening, SLOMA is a magnet for the community's most eclectic residents from students and faculty to tourists and families." The three gallery spaces offer rotating and overlapping exhibitions throughout the year. And every Second Saturday, afternoon art activities bring out the next generation of art lovers to the museum's lawn, where both long- and short-term rotations of sculptural installations and murals are installed.

On view now, Lisa Solomon's Cellular Memory investigates intertwining conversations about state and family history, layers of identity, the winds of geopolitics, and the endurance of tradition, employing a range of materials, narratives and formats. As a first generation American, deeply impacted by the cruel chapter of Japanese internment, and also engaged in carrying honor for imparted ancestral tradition, Solomon's work reflects her life experience — inhabiting multiple points of view simultaneously. In self-portraits wearing traditional national costume, a circle of over 100 gold-leafed stone pagodas in remembrance of the unjustly imprisoned, a study of racist propaganda and policy language, and in a large-scale sculpture based on the geometry of traditional fishing nets, the artist weaves together a multivalent, emotionally poignant answer to and rejection of the question, "But where are you really from?" Through Aug. 28.

Light sculptures and works on paper by Anila Quayyum Agha in their way also deal with the complexities and contradictions inherent in everyone's psyche, but made all the more visible and manifest when it comes to the divisions we face in society. Liminal Space draws on the visual language of her own Pakistani heri-

circle of artists and educators to provide a community creative space for artists and creatives. Later known as the San Luis Obispo Art Center, the organization began offering student classes and a modest exhibitions program. In 2011, the art center became the San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, with the ambition to become a full-fledged regional museum, with a curatorial outlook of celebration and growth.

"The San Luis Obispo Museum of Art



Anila Quayyum Agha
Liminal Space
(Courtesy of SLOMA - Photo by Heraldo Creative)

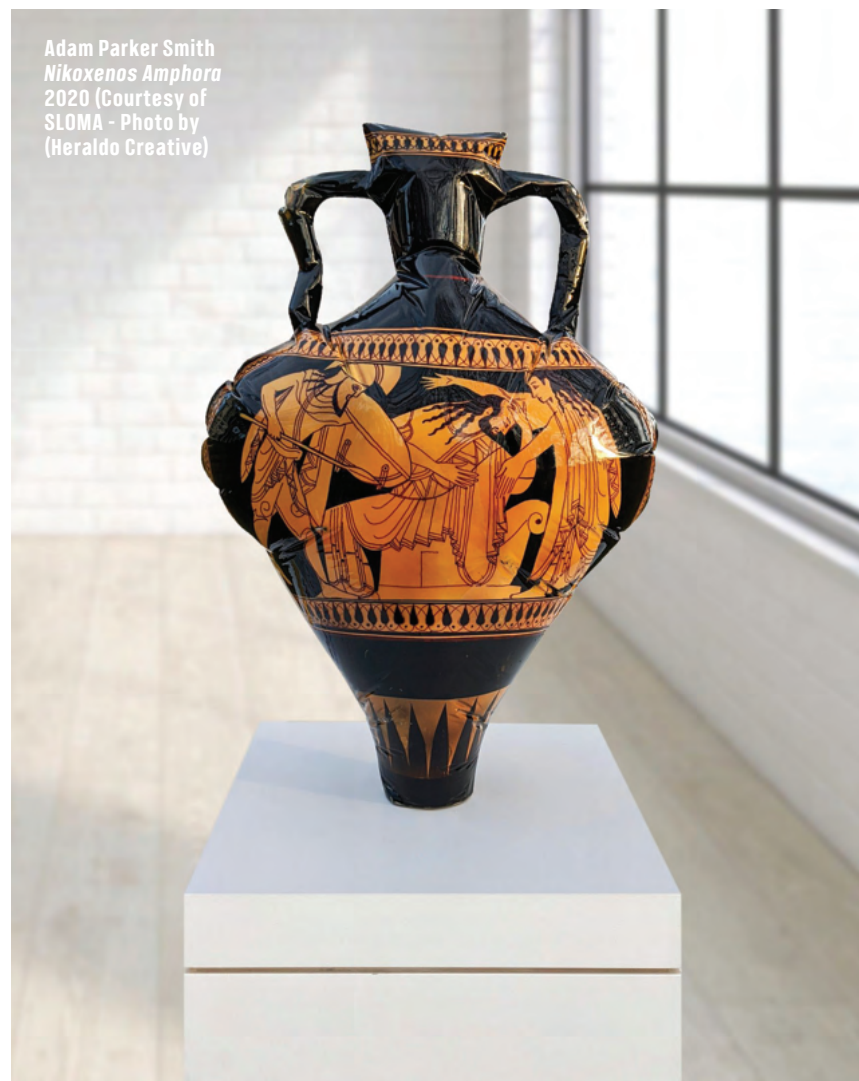
tage, and fusing these motifs with modern Western narratives in a reflection of the immigrant experience of resilience and shifting milieus, Agha's work creates a shared space of light, shadow and pattern in which all are invited to safely gather. Her mixed-media compositions using reflective materials and intricate embroidery and beading further merge approaches and references to create unique and transcendent objects that are both beautiful and saturated with meaning. Through Oct. 29.

The dialogue around how the past informs us in the present continues in the sculptural and mixed-media installation by Vanessa Wallace-Gonzales: *I Am Medicine*. She, too, looks to the long and storied cultural legacies of her ancestors to generate a somatic environment of "visuals, scent, sound, movement, touch and taste" centering acts of healing with a joyfulness of which a supply of artist-made handmade sugar candies are emblematic. Paper collages, ceramic figures, wafting aromatics, a soundtrack created with Emilio Morones (who also worked

on the candy) all combine in a healing embrace of nostalgia and folk magic. Through Nov. 12.

On the SLOMA exterior, San Francisco artist Leah Rosenberg's *SLO(W) Rainbow* wraps the entire structure in every direction in an exuberant, color-forward love letter to the city. From its coastal sunsets and other rulers of the night sky, to the beauty of the surrounding natural landscape across the seasons, the mural announces the institution as a welcoming place, bringing its intentions outside for the whole world to enjoy whether or not they come inside — but also to help get them to come inside. On view through Summer 2024.

Other public art on the SLOMA grounds includes another project from Anila Quayyum Agha, whose exhibition is on view inside. *The Greys in Between* uses similar techniques to her ornate cut-out/light projection piece on view in the gallery, and like that work, takes on issues around race, class, religion and immigration by creating a warm and welcoming space. Installed as a freestanding



Adam Parker Smith
Nikoxenos Amphora
2020 (Courtesy of
SLOMA - Photo by
(Heraldo Creative)

sculptural beacon whose energy of presence shifts from day into night, the work prompts spontaneous gathering and poetic flights of thought.

Ada Parker Smith's David sculpture is like if the famous 17th century Bernini got the full John Chamberlain treatment in a car crusher, as the iconic piece of art history is compressed into a cubic meter square with all the irreverence, art historical wit and psychological metaphor such a gesture entails. Through April 2024, during which time Parker Smith has an exhibition planned inside SLOMA, as well.

Besides Parker Smith's exhibition of elevated sculptural follies next Spring, in the coming year SLOMA mounts a retrospective of the late Central Coast painter and provocateur John Barrett and his incendiary post-punk dark Pop vernacular, a show of mixed-media works by emergent artist Alisa Sikelianos-Carter exploring the symbolic power of Black hair, and an interdisciplinary exhibition by April Banks on the fraught topic of water use in California especially with regard to

BIPOC communities.

When you juxtapose this exciting roster of local and international voices taking on urgent and timely issues from the discourse zeitgeist with the more conventional holdings of the SLOMA permanent collection, you approach the paradox and potential at the heart of an institution like SLOMA. On the one hand, the primary duty and legacy mission of the place is to chronicle and enshrine the practices of the current and historical local and regional art community — and the panoply of eclectic but conventional landscapes, portraits and forays into abstraction by the most talented of the old SLO guard — is a testament to that foundational heart. At the same time, it's both a college town and a good size city and thus the mission of such a place becomes dual — to not only advance the local, but to bring the global to the table alongside it, so that each may come to inform the other and continue to grow the culture.

Admission is always free; for more information, visit: slo.ma.org.

LA WEEKLY CLASSIFIEDS

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LEGAL

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SUMMONS (CITACION JUDICIAL)

CASE NUMBER (Número del Caso): 23PSCV01558 NOTICE TO DEFENDANT (AVISO AL DEMANDADO): Fancywood Cabinetry Inc.; and Xiaodong Sun YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF (LO ESTÁ DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE): Lilia García-Brower, California State Labor Commissioner NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below. You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages,

money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court. There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of \$10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case. ¡AVISO! Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su versión. Lea la información a continuación. Tiene 30 DÍAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y más información en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede más cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario de la corte que le dé un formulario de exención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin más advertencia. Hay otros requisitos legales. Es recomendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remisión a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de

un programa de servicios legales sin fines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin fines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services, (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California, (www.sucorte.ca.gov) o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. AVISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos exentos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación de \$10,000 ó más de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso.

The name and address of the court is (El nombre y dirección de la corte es): POMONA COURTHOUSE SOUTH 400 CIVIC CENTER PLAZA POMONA CA 91766 The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is (El nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es): Felicia Espinosa, Esq., 770 E. Shaw Ave, Ste 222, Fresno, CA 93710 (415) 792- 3164 DATE (Fecha): 7/25/23 David W. Slayton Clerk (Secretario), by J. Alvaro, Deputy (Adjunto) (SEAL) NOTICE TO THE PERSON SERVED: You are served as an individual defendant. 8/17, 8/24, 8/31, 9/7/23 CNS-3730601# LA WEEKLY



LA WEEKLY Bulletin

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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

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