



Adapted and directed by Mary Zimmerman

You know you're pretty special when painting the Mona Lisa is the least of your accomplishments! Leonardo da Vinci was one of the greatest thinkers of all time. Now Tony Award winner and MacArthur Genius Grantee Mary Zimmerman (The White Snake, Metamorphoses) shapes a genre-busting play entirely from da Vinci's own notebooks. A cast of chameleon-like actors takes us on a journey through da Vinci's mind as he considers everything from math and engineering to philosophy and love. Created by one of the most acclaimed artists working in the American theatre, this unique and breathtaking show that The New York Times called "a fun house of the mind" illuminates what it truly means to be a Renaissance man.

Now playing! Must close February 26

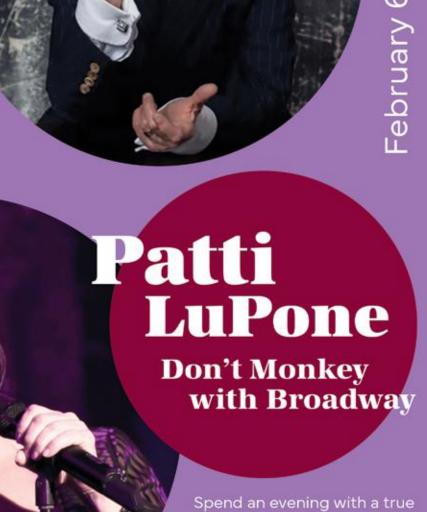
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FEBRUARY 10-11

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PUBLISHER

Jay S. Jones jay@ragemonthly.com

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER

Brad L. Hart brad@ragemonthly.com **EDITOR**

editor@ragemonthly.com

ART CONSULTANT art@ragemonthly.com

COPY EDITOR

Ken Williams

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THE RAGE MONTHLY 3911 Cleveland Ave #34462 San Diego, CA 92103 Phone 619.906.RAGE (7243)

CONTACT US ON THE WEB

- RAGE.LGBT
- twitter.com/ragemonthly
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- instagram.com/theragemonthly

ADVERTISE WITH US 619.906.RAGE(7243) sales@ragemonthly.com NATIONAL ADVERTISING REP Rivendell Media 212.242.6863

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Tom Andrew, Bill Biss, Chris Carpenter, Bella da Ball, Hanz Enyeart, Brad Hart, Jay Jones, Lisa Lipsey, Tim Parks, Tony Reverditto, Freddy Saluna, Cutter Slagle, Andrew J. Stillman



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"TINA FEY'S MEAN GIRLS IS A MARVEL:

HILARIOUS!" DAZZLING AND



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LGBT CENTER PRESENTS INAUGURAL THEATRE SEASON

The Los Angeles LGBT Center has chosen four plays that will comprise its first-ever theatre season, celebrating the depth and diversity of LGBTQ narratives. The lineup spans 88 performances, including world premieres, an award-winning comedy and a radically reimagined musical — each presented in partnership with local theatre companies.

"Building on The Center's rich legacy of storytelling and community building, we're thrilled to announce our first full theatre season," said **Jonathan Muñoz-Proulx**, The Center's artistic director. "It's an honor to champion these amazing stories in partnership with some of LA's most visionary theatre companies. Together we're embarking on an ambitious season celebrating community, collaboration and connection."

Performances will begin at the Davidson/Valentini Theatre on **Thursday, February 9** with Mike Bartlett's Olivier Award-winning play **Cock**, a comedic look at the complexities of human sexuality, presented in partnership with Clearglass Productions.

The Center will then collaborate with Big Little Theater Company for the world premiere in March of Miranda Rose Hall's innovative musical *Menstruation: A Period Piece*.

In April, Celebration Theatre and The Center will present **A New Brain**, a gender-expansive, immersive production of the Finn and Lapine musical of "captivating eccentricity" (*The New York Times*) about second chances and the urgency of art.

Rounding out the season will be Nicholas Pilapil's *The Bottoming Process*, a dark comedy that tackles issues of race, sex, power and the model minority myth. It will make its world premiere at the Renberg Theatre in May, co-produced by IAMA Theatre Company and The Center.

Also coming up at The Center: In commemorating Black History Month, The Center will host **The Future is Black: Renaissance** on **Saturday, February 4** at The Village at Ed Gould Plaza in Hollywood, honoring Grammy-nominated musician **Big Freedia**. The free event will include an award presentation, panel discussions, an interactive portrait studio and a "mini-ball" after-party. The celebration will be hosted by Tre'vell Anderson and jarrett hill of the podcast FANTI.

"The Future is Black is a celebration that honors Black queer love, joy and liberation," said **Gerald Garth**, the DE&I Director for The Center. "We are thrilled to welcome Big Freedia to The Center and to celebrate with our community."

The event will also showcase a panel on **America Has a Problem**, which will survey the city's progress in the years since the protests and civil unrest of 2020. Panelists will include Capri Maddox, appointed by L.A. Mayor Eric Garcetti to address issues of systemic racism and bias as the city's first-ever executive director of the Los Angeles Civil + Human Rights & Equity Department (LA Civil Rights). **lalgbtcenter.org**



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MORE LGBTQ FEBRUARY FUN

The Imperial Court de San Diego's big Coronation LI: The Regality of Oz will be held February 2-4 and include an In Town Show and Out of Town Show featuring an evening of entertainment by guests from across the court circuit.



Clue will return to FilmOut San Diego after more than a decade. This hilarious board game-inspired camp fest finds six colorful dinner guests gathered at the mansion of their host, Mr. Boddy — who turns up dead after his secret is exposed: He was blackmailing all of them. With the killer among them, the guests and Boddy's chatty butler (Tim Curry) must suss out the culprit before the body count rises. Lesley Ann Warren, Madeline Kahn, Michael McKean, Eileen Brennan, Christopher Lloyd and Martin Mull also star in this classic whodunit (filmed with three endings; all will be screened on a gorgeous DCP). Co-presented by Mance Creative on **Wednesday**, **February 8** at Landmark Hillcrest Cinemas. filmoutsandiego.com



www.rage.lgbt | FEBRUARY 2023 continues on page 12

REFORMA

FEB 18 OPENING SAT 9PM



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FREAK ON

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INHOUSE

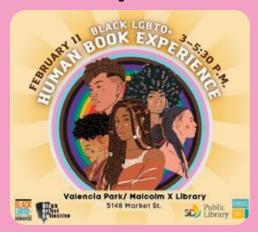


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REFORMAPS.COM

Join the San Diego Black LGBTQ Coalition for their first Black LGBTQ+ Human Book Experience. This is an interactive learning experience where readers can ask human books difficult questions that are expected, appreciated and answered. Every human book is a volunteer with lived experience who represents a group in our society that is often subjected to prejudice, stigmatization or discrimination because of their identities, diagnosis, beliefs, disability, social status or ethnic origin. This is a safe space for dialogue to build trust, mutual understanding and connections. All are welcome to this free event on Saturday, February 11. Poetry slam, music, food, raffles and prizes are included.

sdblackcoalition.org



After a several-year break, The San Diego LGBT Center will bring back the **Red Hot Dance** on **Saturday**, **February 11**. DJ Laura Jane will highlight this party put on by and for all queer women. The event will have a \$5 suggested donation at the door, including one drink ticket and snacks. **thecentersd.org**



The LGBTQ Center OC will host its annual speed-dating and friend-making event Queers, Dears, and Peers 2023 on Saturday, February 11 in Santa Ana. LGBTQ and allied folks, ages 18-29, are invited to this social, entertaining evening to meet new friends, community members or potential matches. Activities include one-on-one and group mixing breakout rooms, introductions, getting familiar with the LGBTQ Center OC, sharing social media and more. Igbtqcenteroc.org



Costa Mesa's South Coast Repertory will hold an LGBTQ community **Pride Night at the Theatre** on **Saturday, February 18**. The fete will be co-sponsored by *The RAGE Monthly* and will include a preshow mixer on the terrace with complimentary wine. Then, enjoy a performance of Lillian Hellman's drama *The Little Foxes*. Use code VOAPRIDE when ordering by phone or online. **scr.org**



Madonna Drag Brunch and Wig Party will be coming to Palm Springs. Sing and dance with the queens to your favorite Madonna hits at Reforma on Saturday, February 18. Hosted by Epiphany Kali with special guests Cee Cee Russell. Be that Material Girl you have always wanted. reformaps.com



Show your support for the #NOH8 movement and add your face to the fight for equal human rights! An open **NOH8 photo shoot** will be held on **Sunday, February 19** in San Diego. Be sure to arrive camera-ready with a plain white shirt to match the signature style of the NOH8 photos. **noh8campaign.com**

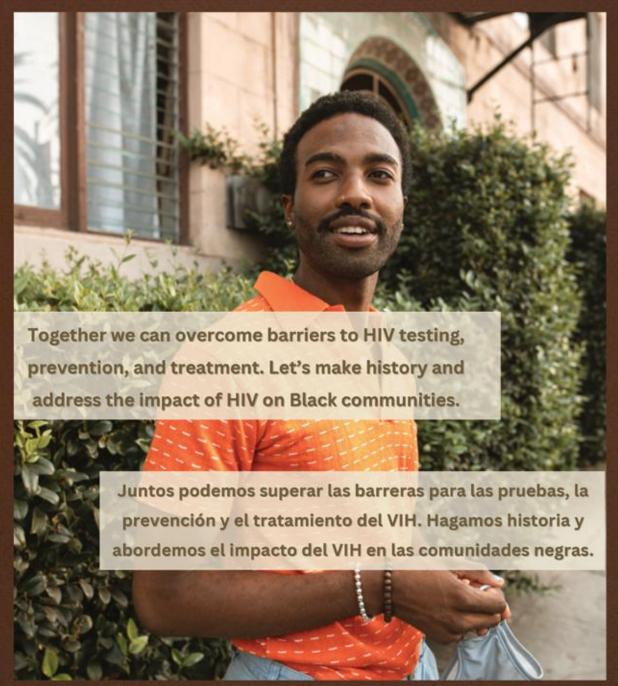


Broadway In Hollywood will host LGBTQ Night for the **Wednesday, February 22** performance of *Disney's The Lion King* at Hollywood Pantages Theatre. Your ticket will include an exclusive pre-show event at Wood & Vine restaurant (across the street from The Pantages). Along with treats from other neighborhood partners.

broadwayinhollywood.com/lgbtqnight



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Love To Love You Baby..

It's no secret that my longest lasting relationship has been with pop culture, from the Disney records I sang along with, to TV families like The Brady Bunch making me wonder why my own family life wasn't as harmonious, and countless viewings of movies seen infinitum.

But enough about what I did last night.

Not to toot toot, hey, beep beep my own horn, but my alleged "useless trivia" memory bank does make me feel less stupid watching *Jeopardy* when there's an entertainment-based category to run the board on. Plus, I have become as useful as

Google to my peeps, who turn to me instead of a search engine with pop culture queries and have christened me "Rain Man" because of my knowledge vault.

Besides, knowing how to change the oil in my car is an overrated skill, in my humble opinion.

If eel fortunate to have an outlet to entertain and inform on a monthly basis. But enough about me. Here are a few of my favorite things, which coincide with the month most associated with l'amour. Oh, it's also my birthday month. Oops, I forgot it's not all about me. Sure, Jan.



AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS

It's a long-running gag of mine among my friends and relations to proclaim an actor as America's sweetheart. And while there have been some new additions, there are some actors who have been steadfast in their achievement of this accolade.

A new kid on the block is 95-year-old **Maybelle Blair**, one of the "let's play ball" women who inspired **A League of Their Own**. She served as a consultant on last year's Amazon TV reboot and used the platform to publicly come out, proving it's better late than never to be your authentic self.

What makes a gay icon, well, iconic? You can ask killer doll **M3gan**, who looks like an Olsen twin to me and is taking the community by storm with her blend of being fashionable, having killer dance moves and a mouth to rival even the bitterest kween.

Another star who is also having a moment is *Wednesday*'s **Jenna Ortega.** The series has been renewed for a second season, bee tee dub. Ortega will next be seen in *Scream VI* or *Ghostface Takes Manhattan*, as I'm calling it given its New York City setting. March 10.

Even though she is now considered "box-



office poison," per multiple media outlets, following two flops in a row with *Amsterdam* and *Babylon*, I'm rooting for **Margot Robbie** to turn the tides with the upcoming *Barbie* movie. It looks to be camptastic — yes that's a word! — from the recent teaser trailer and photos from its filming with a very platinum **Ryan Gosling** as Ken. July 21.

Ifirst fell for **Aubrey Plaza**'s deadpan delivery on *Parks and Recreation* and her kooky talk show appearances. Recently, she cemented her status in the America's sweetheart realm with her role on Season 2 of HBO Max's *White Lotus* and the film *Emily the Criminal*, streaming on Netflix. She's currently starring in the action/comedy *Operation Fortune: Ruse de guerre* with the always delicious **Jason Statham**, and has four upcoming projects, including appearing on Disney+'s *Agatha: Coven of Chaos*. Hopefully one she can add to her resume is as Marsha Sprinkle in **John Waters**' *Liarmouth* — she would nail it as the suitcase thief.

Last month, I touched on how **Jennifer Lawrence** mistakenly claimed she was the first female action star — cough, cough, ya



ain't. And while I wholeheartedly agree that **Sigourney Weaver** propelled the mantle into the stratosphere, so to speak, I also wondered why no one gave **Pam Grier** a shout-out? Her early career in low-budget and highly entertaining Blaxploitation movies like **Foxy Brown, Friday Foster** and my personal fave **Coffy** saw her taking names and kicking ass. Give Pam some love, people! Audiences will have a chance to see her onscreen again in three post-production projects, including the **Pet Sematary** prequel.

While we wait for **Legally Blonde 3** to bend and snap its way into theatres — they were still working on the script last September — we have another Reese Witherspoon role reprisal, Tracy Flick from 1999's *Election*. The sequel **Tracy Flick Can't Win** sees the living embodiment of a Type A personality as a vice principal vying to take over the public school's top spot as principal.

Ever since her titular character was pronounced as "terrible" in *Muriel's Wedding*, I've continued to say "I Do" to watching **Toni Collette** prove to be the antithesis of that sentiment in both film and TV incarnations,





such as recent roles in *The Estate* and *Pieces* of *Her* and *The Staircase*. The prolific actor could technically be considered Australia's sweetheart, her country of origin, because that's a thing, right? Anyhoo, look for her in Amazon's thriller series *The Power*, which is not based on the 1990 song by Snap! Rather it's about a group of teen girls who can electrocute people at will. Neat!

There are three treasured the spians who continue to buck the trend that there aren't roles for women of a "certain age." **Rita Moreno** is part of the senior citizen dream team, including **Jane Fonda** and **Lily Tomlin** in **80 For Brady**, hitting theatres on February 3. The EGOT-winning force-to-be-reckoned with shows no signs of slowing down at 91 years old,

putting the pedal to the metal in the newest The Fast and the Furious film Fast X. The action flick also co-stars Dame Helen Mirren, who has five movies scheduled for release this year, including the aforementioned Barbie, Shazam! Fury of the Gods and starring as Golda Meir in Golda, as well as starring on Paramount+'s Yellowstone prequel 1923 with Harrison Ford.

Circling back to Moreno, another 80 For Brady co-star — who missed the titular 80 by four years — is the incomparable **Sally Field**. When she lamented of not being deserving of the title of America's sweetheart in 1991's **Soapdish**, I almost stood up in the movie theatre and screamed, "But you are, bish, you are!"

There's many cases-in-points to be made

why Field should trademark this moniker to follow her name. For me, it was her stints on The Flying Nun and Gidget I watched in reruns as a kid — thank you very much which drew me in. A flamer to a moth, as it were. There's two Academy Awards to factor in and a myriad of outstanding performances, most recently in **Spoiler Alert**, which solidifies her stature as the penultimate sweetheart for me. And it was recently announced she will be the recipient of the 2023 SAG Life Achievement Award for both her career achievements and humanitarian efforts. We can't deny the fact that we like you. Right now, we really like you! Did you really think I'd let the opportunity slip by to paraphrase her 1985 Oscar speech?

LOOKING FOR A NEW LOVE

I'm always on the lookout for new entertainment to either make me fall madly in love with it, or one that will make my eyes roll back into my head, but not in an ecstasy kind of way and born of agony. I'll leave it to you to figure out which falls into what category.

MTV's **The Real Friends of WeHo** looks to piggyback off Bravo's long running *Housewives* franchise with "some of Hollywood's most influential and successful LGBTQ+ celebrities, personalities and entrepreneurs." And the *Real Friends* consist of celebrity stylist **Brad Goreski**, scandal-riddled *RuPaul's Drag Race's* **Todrick**

Hall, Surviving Compton actor Curtis Hamilton, Buttah Skincare CEO Dorión Renaud, TV "super host" Jaymes Vaughan and social media influencer Joey Zauzig. Oh, this is for real? I thought MTV was resurrecting Punk'd.

Alan Cumming hosts Peacock's competition series *The Traitors* featuring a mix of fame whores, err, celebrities like *Real Housewives of Beverly Hills* alum **Brandi Glanville** and regular folks with normal jobs where "treachery and deceit are the name of the game" to steal the grand prize.

If HBO Max's adaptation of the video game

The Last of Us follows its source material, then we could see Ellie (**Bella Ramsey**) follow in the footsteps of being the first queer woman protagonist featured in a major blockbuster game. As it stands, we get another show featuring out actor **Murray Bartlett** and yummy **Pedro Pascal**, and I'm OK with that!

Do you long for the bygone days of classic TV detective shows, like *Columbo*? Then Peacock's *Poker Face* should, ahem, be up your alley. **Natasha Lyonne** stars as a lie-detecting poker player in writer/director **Rian Johnson**'s (*Knives Out*) case-of-the-week series.











Her Charlie Cale character hits the road in her Plymouth Barracuda to solve crimes after her friend is murdered.

Can Paramount+'s **Grease: Rise of the Pink Ladies** somehow — and doubtfully — recapture the magic of 1978 musical phenomenon? That remains to be seen in the prequel detailing the beginnings of Rydell High's girl gang, sans Rizzo. At the very least it may finally remove the bad taste that *Grease 2* left in my

mouth, lo, those many years ago. April 6.

As for movies, you can utter the phrase, "I see gay people" while viewing M. Night Shyamalan's *Knock at the Cabin*, which stars **Jonathan Groff** and **Ben Aldridge** as gay parents who must make an unthinkable decision to avert the apocalypse, after four strangers take them hostage. I hope it's not debating which Madonna song is the best! Decisions, decisions! February 3.

For me, John Wick: Chapter 4 is the cinematic equivalent of getting a movie-based boner. The action series is my absolute favorite of all-time and I have been eagerly awaiting Keanunu Reeves' next outing as the hit man. And seeing the trailer gave me the tingling sensation all over again. Should I consult my doctor if said sensation lasts more than four hours? Certainly, it will last until I see it on opening day. March 23.







SCROLLIN' WITH THE HOMIES

One of my goals for the New Year — I hate resolutions because they seem destined to fail — is to have less RBF, or RBG as I once mistakenly said I had a case of to my niece and to smile more. These Instagram pages help in that endeavor.

Two comedians who have always left me in stitches, **Amy Sedaris** and **Deven Green**, keep true to their funny roots with their pages. @**amysedaris** is eclectic, like the woman herself, with campy video clips and cute animals populating it. While @**thedevengreen** features the voiceovers to existing videos, featuring soap opera stalwarts like Deidre Hall and Victoria Principal.

@yurilamasbella's page is mainly comprised of her spot-on impressions of the **Kardashian** clan, as she spoofs Kim, Kourtney and Khloe in various situations, like Kourtney's

crisis due to a banana shortage.

@jakemnodar calls himself "the cock whisperer," but it's in relation to roosters, so get your mind out of the gutter! However, it's his hilarious DIY videos that sold me, like his recipe for homemade vodka and turning trash into treasure with handmade wreaths made from discarded bicycle tires.

Hands down @thisaintnodisco has the best memes that make me LOL and sometimes ROTFLMAO and @worst.buy lives up to its name by featuring products nobody would ever want, like Doritos Tobacco flavored chips.

And speaking of food to make you gag...a trio of culinary-based profiles are sure to make even the most abysmal cheffeel good about their kitchen prowess. Both @70sdinnerparty and @vintagerecipecaeds will have you wondering, "What the eff was wrong with

people in the '70s?" Case in point is if you could put it in aspic, you did, even shrimp and hardboiled eggs. @followme4morerecipes_ offers helpful tips for jazzing up any meal, like adding cut up hotdogs to your boring old

For your daily dose of camp, may I suggest three choices for you? That was a rhetorical question. @mommiesmemeland features hilarious Joan Crawford/Mommie Dearest-themed memes — duh! — and @poptrashmuseum and @thekitschbitch feature random bits of hilarious blasts from the past.

Cut. Print. That's a Wrap!

And there you have it, pop culture items to rekindle old flames or have the potential to start a new relationship with. Until next time, that's all the news that's fit to print.



PPY FEBRUA

Happy Valentine's Day, Happy Modernism Week, Happy Black History Month. Here's to a busy month of celebrating love and fabulous life in the Palm Springs area.





The **Mod Squad Variety Show** is held Wednesdays at Palm Springs Cultural Center. modsquadshow.com

The next round of Rusty Waters' eight-week drag competition **Spotlight** runs Wednesdays at Hunters. **hunterspalmsprings.com**

Vanity Halston's Drag Star 10-week challenge continues

Sundays in February at One Eleven Bar.

vanitysdragstarchallenge.com

Open Mic Night takes place Wednesdays at Neuro Vitality Center with host Allan Jensen and Joel Baker on keyboard. National Caregivers Day resource fair is **Friday**, **February 17** at the center. neurovitalitycenter.org



Enjoy a live, open-air jazz series Wednesdays at Ace Hotel & Swim Club. Monday activities include **Bingo** in King's Highway Restaurant and **Trivia** in the Amigo Room.

acehotel.com/palm-springs

The Purple Room has a variety of shows and productions this month. Taking the stage are Lucie Arnaz, Billy Stritch, Elvis the Early Years with Scot Bruce, Marilyn Maye, Ann Hampton Callaway and more. purpleroompalmsprings.com



Cruise Night El Paseo with classic cars on the upper-level parking deck of The Gardens on El Paseo is February 3, 17 and March 3. After an afternoon of viewing the classics, they cruise down El Paseo for all to enjoy. The 25th annual concert series at The Gardens continues with these musical evenings benefitting local organizations.

On **February 4** it's **Pulp Vixen**, benefitting Shay's Warriors Life After Cancer. February 11 features Journey Captured benefitting Voices for Children. Lisa Lynn and The Broken **Hallelujahs** benefitting Friends of the Desert Mountains on February 18. Coming February 25 it's Eevaan Tre and The **Show**, benefitting Bianca Rae Foundation. On March 4 it's **Slim Man** benefiting Coachella Valley Volunteers in Medicine. thegardensonelpaseo.com

The **Palm Springs Black History Committee** awards gala is **Saturday**, **February 4** at Palm Springs Hilton Hotel. **Aneka Brown Designs** present the seventh annual Black History Month cultural, fashion, music and art extravaganza also on Saturday, **February 4** at 1386 South Driftwood Drive. anekabrowndesigns.com

The Palm Springs Black History parade and town fair in the downtown city park happens Saturday, February 25. visitpalmsprings.com

Musical Theatre University presents **A Chorus Line** on February 3-5 at Helene Galen Performing Arts Center at Rancho Mirage High School. Broadway's Singular Sensation features Broadway veteran Erik Altemus (from Pippin, The Fantasticks), and a cast of 20 current MTU students and alumni from the past years. eventbrite.com

The seventh annual Taste of Jalisco Festival, celebrating the 26-year sister-city relationship between Cathedral City and Tequila, Jalisco, Mexico, is February 3-5. Music, fashion,

spirits, culture and cuisine will be celebrated. tasteofjalisco.com



Firebirds hockey team has many theme nights and

promotional events at Acrisure Arena.



Including Pink in the Rink on Saturday, February 4 and Hometown Hero on Saturday, February 18. On Saturday, March 11 it's Military Appreciation night. cvfirebirds.com

The second annual Caliente Doo Wop and Sock Hop is Saturday, February 4 at Agua Caliente Casino, Cathedral City, Agave Caliente Terraza. There will be a costume contest, live entertainment with

The Dreamboats band and DJ Modgirl. Also, **Johnny Mathis** appears on Saturday, February 4 at Agua Caliente's The Show, Rancho Mirage. Enjoy Party Gras at Agua Caliente Palm Springs on **Saturday, February 18** with a New Orleansinspired celebration. Live entertainment, games, prizes and costume contest in their outdoor event space, with LA All Stars and a Second Line parade. aguacalientecasinos.com

A special premier stage production, **Aces**, opens **Thursday**, **February 9** for several weeks at Oscar's Restaurant. Featuring Kitty Murray, Yo Younger, Denise Carey, Dana Adkins, Denise Strand and Christine Tringali-Nunez, the story revolves around 35 years after their crownings, five of the Miss Texas USAs that each won their Miss USA pageants from 1985 to 1989, reunite at a television station to tell their stories. Judith Chapman is the director. oscarspalmsprings.com



Desert Theatreworks presents **The Mousetrap** with performances **February 10 through March 5** at the Indio Performing Arts
Center. **dtworks.org**

The **National Gay Pilot's Association**Winter Warm-Up happens **February 9-12** in Palm Springs. This flagship West Coast event

 $includes\ activities\ at\ Palm\ Springs\ Convention\ Center\ and\ Air\ Museum.$

ngpa.org

The City of Indio presents a free concert on the second Saturday of the month (**Pulp Vixen** performs this month) and Farmers Market on Sundays in downtown. **indio.org**

The **LA Galaxy Foundation** will host a golf tournament at Desert Willow Golf Resort, Palm Desert, on **Friday, February 10**. All proceeds from the tournament will benefit the foundation's mission to provide soccer programming and opportunities to grow the game of soccer while promoting health, wellness and leadership development with local youth. **lagalaxy.com/community/golf**

The 25th annual Tour de Palm Springs on Saturday, February

11 honors military, first responders and veterans. Every year, they see up to 10,000 cyclists from 46 states and four countries. Over 20 band concerts are held. The routes include a one-mile walk, three-mile walk and 7, 25, 34, 56, 85, 102-mile bike ride routes.

tourdepalmsprings.com

The first **Lunar Festival** at The River, presented by the City of Rancho Mirage Cultural Commission, is **Saturday**, **February 11**. The free festivities in the year of the rabbit (a symbol of longevity, peace and prosperity) will include live music, vendors, lion dancers, children's craft station and more celebrating Asian arts and culture. **ranchomirageca.gov**

The 20th anniversary **Dr. George Charity**

Car Show on **Saturday, February 11** at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden benefits the Desert Cancer Foundation. The event will feature more than 1,000 cars, front engine dragsters and a kids pedal car race. **desertcancerfoundation.org**

Coming to the interactive dinner theatre PS Underground this month is **Forever Elvis Brunch** on **Sunday, February 12; Stupid Cupid** on **Tuesday, February 14; Plaza** (especially for Modernism Week) **February 17-25.** Plus, the musical revue **Motown** on **March 3-4**. **psunderground.com**

Super Bowl LVII will be Sunday, February 12. Cheer on your



favorite team at your house party or local watering hole. Rihanna will headline the halftime show. The Roost Lounge in Cathedral City hosts its third annual **Super Bowl Chili Cookoff Contest. theroostcc.com**

30 30 30 30 3



A *Victor Victoria* **Valentine** event will be **Tuesday, February 14** at Palm Springs Cultural Center (Camelot Theatre) featuring Lesley Ann Warren. The event will be hosted by Bruce Vilanch with performance by Ethylina Canne. Screening of *Victor Victoria* film. **palmspringsculturalcenter.org**

Palm Springs Chamber of Commerce presents **Movies in the Park** in the new downtown Palm Springs Park. This month's feature is *The Girl Can't Help It* starring Jayne Mansfield and Tom Ewell on **Wednesday**, **February 15**. **pschamber.org**

Modernism Week returns **February 16-26** with about 400 events (tours, car show, trailer show, parties, talks, dances) celebrating architecture, lifestyle, food, fashion, music, fun, celebrities, neighborhoods and attitude. Several salutes to Nancy Sinatra will be held, including **Boots on Arenas**, the ultimate street party celebration honoring Nancy on **Saturday, February 25**. Get your boots, big hair and 1960s vibe ready. Yours truly will be hosting several double-decker bus tours. **modernismweek.com**

Riverside County Fair and National Date Festival is **February 17-26** at the 91-acre Riverside County Fairgrounds event center in Indio. datefest.org

Out at the Fair on **Saturday, February 18** celebrates LGBTQ participants, bands, kings, queens, magicians, chefs and more. **outatthefair.com**

Coming up at Desert Theatricals at the Rancho Mirage Amphitheatre. Performances include **South Pacific** on **February 17-19** and **Beauty and the Beast** in March. **desert-theatricals.com**

Reforma, the new 10,000-square-feet dining and entertainment hub in downtown Palm Springs, holds its grand opening on **Saturday**, **February 18**. **reformaps.com**

The **Palm Springs Air Museum** has its annual gala on **Saturday, February 18**, celebrating women in aviation. **palmspringsairmuseum.org**

The **Desert Woman's Show** is **Saturday, February 18** at The Classic Club. The event includes shopping, speakers, fashion shows, food and wine tasting. **desertwomansshow.com**

Flagging in the Desert takes place on **Saturday, February 18** at Ruth Hardy Park, benefiting the Transgender Health and Wellness Center. **flagginginthedesert.com**

It's time for **Palm Desert Greek Fest** from **February 18-19** at St. George Greek Orthodox Church in Palm Desert.

psgreekfest.org

Mardi Gras is celebrated **Tuesday**, **February 21**. Check your favorite clubs, bars, restaurants and venues for happenings.



A **Community Open Mic** honoring the late Les Michaels' birthday and a fundraiser towards a star on the Palm Springs Walk of Stars will be held **Tuesday**, **February 21** at the Palm Springs Cultural Center. A memorial concert and benefit will also be held in Los Angeles at a later date. **star4lesmichaels.com**

International Bear Convergence (IBC), an annual winter event for bears and admirers, returns **February 23-27** at Hotel Zoso along with other local venues. **ibc-ps.com**

The Eagles (Don Henley, Joe Walsh, Vince Gill, Timothy B Schmit) and their *Hotel California* tour comes to Acrisure Arena **February 24-25**. The **Harlem Globetrotters** perform **February 21**. Also coming to the venue is **Jimmy Buffett** on **March 7**. **acrisurearena.com**



 $Mc Cormick's \, 74^{th} \, Palm \, Springs \, Classic$

Car Auction is **February 24-26** at Palm Springs Convention Center where more than 500 vehicles will be up for

classic-carauction.com

auction. Friday is free admission.

The 10th anniversary **L-Fund Gala** happens on **Saturday, February 25** at Margaritaville Resort. **I-fund.org**



Come Fly with Me, a musical journey from Broadway to Peking, benefiting the LGBTQ Community Center of the Desert, is Saturday, February 25 at Runway Bar and Restaurant. runwaycatcity.com

The 16th annual **La Quinta Hot Rod and Custom Car Show**,
presented by the Coachella
Valley Chamber of Commerce
in partnership with the City of
La Quinta, rolls onto town on **Saturday, February 25** at La
Quinta Community Park. Free to

attend and free parking. Iqcarshow.com

The **Desert Winds Freedom Band's** 2023 jazz band concert and gala fundraiser *The Sounds of Frank and Ella!* takes place at the Jewish Community Center on **Sunday, February 26**. Guest vocalists are Hope Diamond and Patrick Barnitt. **desertwindsfb.org**

Old Town Artisan Studios presents an **Open Mic Night** on **Monday, February 27**. Welcoming musicians, songwriters, poets, comedians, storytellers and artists. **oldtownartisanstudios.org**



SAVETHE DATE!

The Palm Springs

Chamber of Commerce holds free outdoor concerts called **Rock the Park** on the first Wednesday of each month in the new downtown park. On **Wednesday, March 1**, it's **Wanted** featuring the music of Bon Jovi. **pschamber.org**

Cathedral City LGBT Days, the first California Pride festival of the year, is **March 3-5**. The annual bed parade and bed race will be Sunday, hosted by yours truly. There will be special dance parties, theatrical presentations and salutes and more. **cathedralcitylgbtdays.com**

The Roost Foundation will present **Nest Fest**, a queer community music festival, from **March 3 through 5** at The Roost Lounge. **theroostcc.com**

The **Coachella Valley Wildflower Festival** is **Saturday, March 4** at Palm Desert Civic Center Park. Free celebration features local artists and exhibitors, live music, celebrating wellness, recreation, safety and the outdoors. **desertmountains.org**

Hollywood's Biggest Night, a celebration of the annual Academy Awards, takes place on **Sunday, March 12** at Trio Restaurant benefiting AAP-Food Samaritans. The glittering evening will include the signature orange carpet arrivals and greeting from yours truly. The pre-show and awards presentations will be viewed on special screens throughout the restaurant. **aidsassistance.org**

The ever so popular, sells out within minutes, **Red Dress Dress Red Party**, is **Saturday**, **March 18** at Palm Springs Air
Museum. The event benefits the LGBTQ Community Center of
the Desert. The Center is partnering with Revivals and offering a
special shop for red wear and red accessories **Friday**, **February 24**. **thecentercy.org**

White Party Palm Springs in back **May 12-14**. Warm-up parties will be held throughout the nation: Denver, February 11; New Orleans, February 17; Wilton Manors, Florida, February 18; Atlanta, March 4; San Francisco, March 18; San Diego, April 8; Los Angeles, April 29. **whitepartyglobal.com**



Happy Valentine's Day. Thanks for the love! Hugs & kisses.



QUEER-ISH VALENTINE'S GIFTS FOR THE ONES YOU LOVE-ISH

Spread the love this Valentine's Day with these festive, fun and sometimes frisky gifts to fill all your special someones' (hey, we don't judge) hearts with happiness and felt appreciation.

LOVE SCRIPT PILLOWS

PillowScript's royal-hued love script pillows – in muted green, red, blue or gray – imbue your personal space with optimism, openness and a velvety softness smoother than Cupid's bare bottom. \$50, pillowscript.com

TALE AS OLD AS TIME

At once slim and sleek, the Vincero Kairos and Eros Petite mesh and leather-banded watches look stunning on a beauty or a beast. \$99-\$178, vincerocollective.com

FONDUE FEASTS

You dip, she dips, they dip bite-size savories and sweets into BOSKA's cheese and chocolate fondue sets equally suited for a sophisticated date night at home or as the centerpiece of a '70s-inspired Galentine's party. Better dust off the orgy lamp. \$33-\$44, usa.boska.com

COVERED IN LOVE

Kisses and hugs and on-the-couch snugs are instantly cozier in Sunday Citizen's XOXO throw or the Mamas Blanket x Calhoun & Co.'s pink-and-red girl-power blanket for wrapping up near-and-dear babes and broads. \$170, sundaycitizen.co; \$138, austinmotelstore.com

PLAYBOY PLEASURE

One might assume that a synonymous-with-sex brand like Playboy would already have a leg (or two) up on the adult-toy industry, but its recently launched, first-foray Playboy Pleasure line couldn't be rushed: The inaugural collection includes vibrators with heating, tapping and thrusting functions; a spinning butt plug; multi-motor cock rings; toys with flickering tongues; solo strokers, and a first-of-its-kind flapper shaft for the G-spot. You're gonna need a bigger tarp. \$26-\$200,

loversstores.com

CHINOLAX VESTA CHOCOLATE

Skip the Stover's and improve your chocolate-gifting game with limited-edition Chinola bonbon and ganache chocolates, the melt-in-your-mouth collab between Dominican-sourced Chinola Passion Fruit Liqueur and Vesta Chocolate, co-founded by Chef Roger Rodriguez. \$25-\$48, vestachocolate.com

LACE CHARMS

Customize your kicks with splashes of sparkle when you outfit their laces with burnished beads and baubles – like Lace Charms' Digital Pink Bundle, featuring gold stars and rosy bling-blings – fit for sneakerhead kweens and king-kings. \$30-\$75, lacecharms.com















HAPPY JUICE

You'll get your lips kissed when you twirl a Sunkist on the stylish Verve Culture artisan citrus juicer (available in gold, rose gold and black), your new go-to hand-operated appliance that gilds the lily of an already decadent holiday brunch in bed. \$98-\$150, verveculture.com

POWER FLOWERS

If Miley can buy herself flowers, so can you: Treat your resilient self to Perfect Plants' bounty of blooms – including houseplants, trees, shrubs, hedges and a wide selection of coveted Drift rose bushes – that'll keep your space fresh long after love stales. \$40+, myperfectplants.com

GASYOUUP

Motivational neon signs that empower you to "Rise & Grind," "LISTEN TO YOUR HEART," "Hu\$tle" and "BE A BAD ASS WITH A GOOD ASS" not only add pops of radiating light and liveliness to your home and office, but they just might reduce your therapy bill too. \$200-\$600, customneon.com

BIG AND BEAUTIFUL

Lizzo launched a thousand hips with her body-positive lyrics and lifestyle, and you can continue that self-satisfying trend with Le Chic Miami's hand-painted, more-to-love basswood Venus hoop earrings, available in three everywoman skin tones. \$27, lechicmiami.store

ALL THE RESTAURANTS

Former New Yorker magazine editor turned self-taught artist John Donohue recognizes that most Americans' first dates take place at restaurants (Starbucks is No.1 while In-N-Out Burger clocks in at No. 2, according to a survey of Clover app users), which is why he has made it his mission to commemorate the occasion with signed, limited-edition prints of your fave romantic dining destinations, including Manhattan's 12 Chairs Café and Abilene Bar, Jaleo in D.C., and London's Noble Rot. \$95, alltherestaurants.com

BYE-BYE DRY JANUARY

Build a more discerning home bar in 2023 with a curated selection of luxury liquors including Empress 1908 and Jaisalmer gins, Rampur Double Cask and Bearface Triple Oak whiskies, Tequila Ocho Plata and L'etoile du Nord vodka.

Prices vary, drizly.com; totalwine.com

ONE LOVE

Dateless for V-Day? Toast your single status—self-imposed independence should be celebrated (just ask Shakira)—with a bottle of Beau Joie Rosé Champagne and poppable Doughp cookie dough bites, in upbeat flavors like Cinnamood, Brownie Beast, Cookie Monsta and Red Velvet Vixen.

\$135, totalwine.com; \$12-\$16, doughp.com





















ERIC HUFFMAN PLAYS THE BELOVED GAY CHARACTER DAMIAN HUBBARD

Mean Girls hit the movie theatres almost 20 years ago in 2004, and the coming-of-age story became a cult classic. Worldwide, it has grossed \$130 million and catapulted much of the cast into stardom.

Mean Girls is now a ferociously funny new musical collaborated by an award-winning creative team that includes director Casey Nicholaw of Aladdin and The Book of Mormon, composer Jeff Richmond from 30 Rock, lyricist Nell Benjamin from Legally Blonde, and book writer Tina Fey, of SNL, 30 Rock and Bossypants fame.

The plot centers around one thing — insecurity!

Teenager Cady Heron was educated in Africa by her scientist parents. When her family moves to the suburbs in Illinois, Cady plunges into public school and gets a quick education on the cruel, unspoken laws of popularity that divide her fellow students into tightly knit cliques. She unintentionally finds herself in the good graces of a self-designated exclusive group of "cool" students, led by ruthless Regina, known as "the Plastics." Cady quickly realizes how the shallow group of new friends earned this nickname.

But when Cady devises a plan to end Regina's reign, she learns the hard

way that you can't cross a Queen Bee without getting stung.
Out actor Eric Huffman portrays Damian Hubbard, one of the central characters. Damian first weaves into the story in Cady's homeroom, along with Janis. The two befriend her, skip class

together, and try to guide her through how high school life usually is. Over time, as Cady becomes included with the Plastics, she becomes more distant from the two. Damian goes with Janis to an art show that Cady was supposed to come to. However, Cady lied that she had to go away with her parents, so she could stay behind and host a get-together to talk to Aaron that turns into a huge party. Damian drives past the party, later realizing that Cady had lied to them. At the Spring Fling, as a united front, Damian and Janis wear matching tuxedos. As Cady throws pieces of the Spring Fling Queen crown, Damian catches a piece of it. Cady apologizes, asking for the three to be friends again, and they make up.

Huffman was on the national tour of *The Book of Mormon* and is a graduate of the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.



The RAGE Monthly caught up with Huffman amid the national tour of Mean Girls, coming soon to San Diego and Orange County.

When did you first realize that you had a love for musical theatre?

Honestly, I was very, very young, probably 3 or 4. Before I even went to preschool, I would sit in my mom's bedroom, and she was doing her hair and makeup in the morning. She had this old CD try that would rotate between three or four CDs and *Les Miz* and *Phantom of the Opera* were the only two CDs she had in there. I learned those by heart, and by the time that I was 4, I was performing *Les Miz* in my mom's bedroom.

Let's fast forward. You get cast as Damian in *Mean Girls*. How do you most identify with the character?

We had a lot of discussions about Damian in rehearsals and his purpose in the show, and we settled on him being the heart of the show. He represents what being a good friend and warm person is. His whole purpose is to show what a good friend is versus Regina. For me, I think that is how I am in life. I am a people person. I love to get to know people and get along with just about everyone, almost to a fault, and I think that is Damian's thing also.

Now, on the flipside, how do you least relate to the character? What is the biggest challenge to make him believable?

He is very outgoing and I seem to be outgoing, but I am very much an outgoing introvert. I have to break that shell sometimes. He's — I wouldn't say in your face — but he's very "out there" and I just have to tell myself, it's OK, I know you may not be comfortable, but let it go and put it out there.

Why do you think the Mean Girls theme remains relevant today?

The Mean Girls movie script was written in 2004, based on the book written in the '90s, and it deals a lot with bullying in those teen years. Specifically girls, but it applies to everyone and I think now with the advent of social media and the fact that everyone has a cell phone, so not

only does bullying still exist, but it's on a whole other level and a hundred times faster than it ever been before. The idea that the burn book is a physical book in 2004, but the burn book now is tweets and Instagram, which go out instantly. These days it has reached the turbo level.

Damian has some of the best one-liners in the show. Which is your favorite and why?

Before I did the show, my favorite was "She doesn't even go here." I used to say that in conversation all of the time. Now, that I am in the show, I am so self-conscious about that because it is so iconic. The lines have blurred from when I use the quote on and off stage, and it remains intimidating.

What message does the cast hope that the audience takes home from the musical?

I think the ultimate message of the show is this idea of embracing who you are as a person and that every person has value and something to be proud of. Not being afraid to be yourself, even in the face of bullying and not fitting in with the clique that you think you want to. If you are true to yourself, you will end up where you are supposed to be, with the people you are supposed to be with.

Can you share some of your future goals?

I have been thinking about that a lot recently. I am going to be finished with the tour in May. It has been part of my life for three years now. It's been a crazy journey, and my future goals are pretty simple at the moment. I am going to be in New York and just see what theatre opportunities present them and follow that. Kind of chase the dream like everyone does.

Mean Girls will be staged Tuesday, February 28 through Sunday, March 5 at San Diego Civic Theatre (sandiegotheatres.org or 619.615.4000). It will then be performed Tuesday, March 7 through Sunday, March 19 at Segerstrom Center for the Arts in Costa Mesa (scfta.org or 714.556.2787).



WORLD-PREMIERE MUSICAL COMES TO LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE

A story that defined a generation has been reimagined as a groundbreaking new musical, *The Outsiders*.

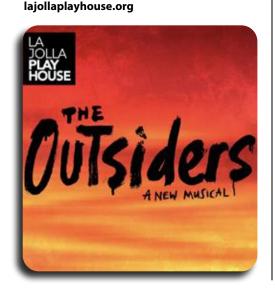
Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1967, the hardened hearts and aching souls of Ponyboy Curtis, Johnny Cade and their chosen family of outsiders are in a fight for survival and a quest for purpose in a world that may never accept them. It's a story of the bonds that brothers share and the hopes we all hold on to.

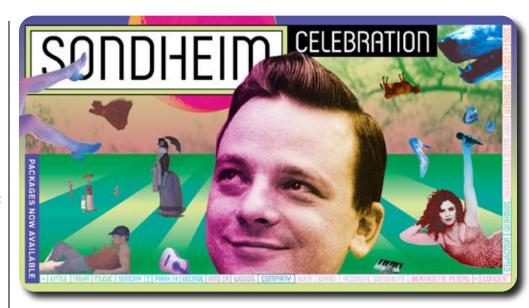
This gripping new musical reinvigorates the timeless tale of haves and have-nots, of protecting what's yours and fighting for what could be.

The Outsiders is adapted from S.E. Hinton's seminal novel and Francis Ford Coppola's groundbreaking film. Performances will begin **Sunday, February 19**.

"It is with tremendous excitement that we cap off our 2022/2023 season with the world premiere of *The Outsiders*. The classic novel and movie have influenced generations of people. This stellar cast and creative team will bring S.E. Hinton's timeless story to vibrant life in a brand new incarnation for the stage," said **Christopher Ashley**, the Rich Family Artistic Director of La Jolla Playhouse.

The cast will include **Brody Grant** as Ponyboy, **Sky Lakota-Lynch** as Johnny, **Daniel Marconi** as Randy, **Kevin William Paul** as Bob, **Brent Comer** as Paul, **Ryan Vasquez** as Darrel, **Da'Von T. Moody** as Dallas, **Jason Schmidt** as Sodapop, **Trevor McGhie** as Two-Bit, **Piper Patterson** as Cherry and **Kiki Lemieux** as Marcia.





SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE KICKS OFF THE SONDHEIM CELEBRATION

One of the most acclaimed musicals of all time and Stephen Sondheim's most innovative and groundbreaking show is the first mainstage production of **Pasadena Playhouse's** six-months-long celebration of the works and impact of Sondheim, the first significant festival honoring his legacy since his death in 2021.

The cast of *Sunday in the Park with George* will be led by **Graham Phillips** (Broadway's *13*, CW's *Riverdale*, CBS' *The Good Wife*) as George Seurat/George and **Krystina Alabado** (Broadway's *Mean Girls* and *American Psycho*) as Dot/Marie. Performances will be from **Tuesday, February 14, through Sunday, March 19** at Pasadena Playhouse.

Sondheim's music brings the world of George Seurat to vivid life, and is the first of three musicals he created with James Lapine, which includes *Into the Woods* (1987) and *Passion* (1994). Sondheim and Lapine won the 1985 Pulitzer Prize for Drama for the work. While it was revived on Broadway in 2008 and again in a celebrated limited run in 2017, *Sunday in the Park with George* has rarely been produced in Los Angeles with the full-scale production it deserves — until now. Inventive, insightful and in a class of its own, this beautiful, captivating masterpiece encapsulates the complexity of life — and the art of understanding it.

On a Sunday afternoon on La Grande Jatte, French artist George Seurat hopes to find the inspiration to create a masterpiece. As the piece comes together, the people come alive; his mother, his friends, his critics and the woman he loves. Stroke by stroke, dot by dot, will George create something lasting, something new? Sunday in the Park with George is a shimmering tribute to "the art of making art," which takes on an even deeper and richer meaning since Sondheim's passing.

"Sunday in the Park With George has been my favorite musical since childhood. How it resonates with me has changed over time, with age, and along the precarious path of pursuing a livelihood and life in the arts," director **Sarna Lapine** said. "I continue to be inspired by how personal this show feels to so many people and how like any great classic, it ages well over time and continues to resonate. It's one of those rare shows where even while working on it, from the inside, I continue to experience what the audience does as if the show erases the divide between creator and observer."

"It is a show that speaks to the creative burn in all of us. It is with tremendous love and gratitude, and joy that I find myself in Los Angeles now and am about to start rehearsals with an astonishing new cast, many of the same members of the creative team that I had the privilege of working with on Broadway, a crew of new collaborators, and under the guidance of a thrilling artistic director, Danny Feldman. May this production celebrate Mr. Sondheim and his dear collaborator, James Lapine. What they created stirs the mind and the heart; the experience of being in the audience (and in the show) illuminates that connection and community are always possible — even across the great chasm of time."

pasadenaplayhouse.org

THE PUCCINI DUO: SUOR ANGELICA AND GIANNI SCHICCHI CONTINUES SAN DIEGO OPERA'S SEASON

San Diego Opera's season continues with The Puccini Duo: a double-bill of the tragic *Suor Angelica* and the witty comic opera *Gianni Schicchi* on **Saturday, February 11** at the San Diego Civic Theatre for four performances. Additional performances are **February 14, 17 and 19**.

Originally scheduled as part of the 2021 Season and postponed because of COVID, however much of the original cast has been preserved including the return of world-renowned mezzo-soprano **Stephanie Blythe** who will make opera history with these performances by

performing the title role of Gianni Schicchi, traditionally performed by a baritone.

"I have tried to eschew the idea of voice category my entire career and been grateful to sing a myriad of roles that are roam the very edges of the definition of a mezzo-soprano," shares Stephanie Blythe, "In singing Schicchi as a man, I am not only exploring gender, but also using a part of my voice that has developed more and more as I grow in age and experience. I am excited about this challenge, because it will give me an opportunity to utilize many of the skills that I have been developing as a singer and as an actor over the last 26 years."

Blythe, last heard in concert with the Company in 2021 performing the songs of Johnny Mercer will also sing the role of Principessa in *Suor Angelica*. She will be joined by soprano Marina Costa-Jackson, in her anticipated Company debut in the title role of *Suor Angelica* and Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi*.

Suor Angelica tells the story of a woman who bears a child out of wedlock and is sent to a convent for penance. After seven years, she is visited by her aunt, the Principessa, who brings tragic news of her son, which sets in motion a series of dire actions that ultimately result in tragedy, forgiveness, and peace.

The comic-opera *Gianni Schicchi* begins with the death of wealthy Florentine Buoso Donati, and his distraught family who are upset about being forgotten in his will. So they enlist the help of fixer Gianni Schicchi who helps turn the tables, but not in the way they expect. Considered a comic masterpiece, this is a dark satire based on a real story mentioned in Dante's Inferno and includes the famous aria "O mio babbino caro." **sdopera.org**

OLD GLOBE'S COMMISSIONED WORLD PREMIERE OF UNDER A BASEBALL SKY

From **José Cruz González**, author of *American Mariachi*, comes The Old Globe-commissioned story about baseball's deep roots in the Mexican-American community. When troublemaker Teo is put to work cleaning up a vacant lot belonging to his elderly neighbor, this unlikely pair form a bond forged in history and America's pastime. Inspired by San Diego's Logan Heights neighborhood and directed by Old Globe Resident Artist **James Vásquez**, this beguiling world premiere celebrates communities and individuals coming together to find hope, healing, love and the occasional home run.

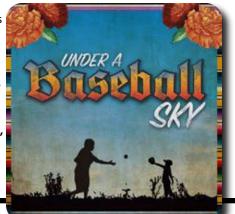
"The Old Globe is back to brilliant life with a 2023 lineup that's as vibrant and exciting as any in our history, with shows that demonstrate why The Globe is one of our country's most dynamic and engaging theatres," Erna Finci Viterbi Artistic Director **Barry Edelstein** said. "The slate includes world premieres, musical theatre, hilarious comedy and deep feeling. The works span a range of theatrical forms, and each one is imagined by artists of national and international renown. This thrilling body of work embodies The Globe's values even as it provides evening after evening of entertainment to San Diego. The shows center stories that reflect the many communities that make up our region, and those stories

bring delight, elicit emotion, and provoke thought. Two Old Globe-commissioned works showcase this theatre's strides in creating new writing for the American stage, and San Diego-based talent figures prominently. There's something for every theatre lover in this season, and I am thrilled to bring the bounty of all of these works

and I am thrilled to bring the bounty of all of these works to audiences whose stalwart support continues to help The Globe make theatre that matters."

Under A Baseball Sky will be performed from **Saturday**,

February 11 through Sunday, March 12 in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre at The Old Globe in Balboa Park. theoldglobe.org





MUSICAL THEATRE WEST NEW PRODUCTION BASED ON THE MEMORABLE FILM

Fifteen years after its original appearance in the Los Angeles theatre scene, **9 to 5**, **The Musical** will debut on the Musical Theatre West stage. Long Beach's premier theatre company will bring some of Dolly Parton's award-winning music to life for its first show of the 2023 season. Just ahead of Women's History Month, this classic hit will uplift spirits and female empowerment as the perfect product to start the new year. Experience **9 to 5**, **The Musical** on select nights from **Friday**, **February 10 through Sunday**, **February 10 through Sunday**, **February 10**

26, and celebrate the official premiere in true "Dollywood" style on Saturday, February 11.

"We wanted our first production of the season to be something funny, exciting and upbeat," said **Paul Garman**, executive director and producer. "We knew 9 to 5 was the perfect choice, and Dolly Parton's masterful songs are sure to bring our audiences to their feet. Our hope is to welcome more of the many different communities in Long Beach and Southern California to our theatre this year, to enjoy a slice of Broadway in their own backyard."

Based on the hit 1980 movie of the same name starring Dolly Parton, Lily Tomlin and Jane Fonda, 9 to 5 was adapted into a musical in 2008 in Los Angeles before taking on Broadway. Set in the male-dominated 1980s workplace, Violet, Doralee and Judy face off against their sexist, egotistical, oppressive boss. Witty dialogue, powerful songs and hilarious scenes make 9 to 5 an instant classic. Music from Grammy Award winner Dolly Parton shines bright. Audiences will hum along to favorites like "Get Out And Stay Out" and the titular "9 to 5." Parton's incredible songs are joined by screenwriter Patricia Resnick's script. The two worked together on the original 1980 film and joined forces once again for the musical production. musical.org

SAN DIEGO MUSICAL THEATRE **EMBARKS ON FIRST PRODUCTION OF NEW YEAR**

The S.S. American is sailing between New York and England with a comically colorful assemblage of passengers: Reno Sweeney, a famous nightclub singer and former evangelist; her pal Billy Crocker, a lovelorn Wall Street broker who has come aboard to try to win the favor of his beloved Hope Harcourt (who is engaged to another passenger, Sir Evelyn Oakleigh); and a second-rate con man named Moonface Martin, aka "Public Enemy #13." Song, dance and farcical antics ensue as Reno and Moonface try to help Billy win the love of his life. A hilarious shipboard romp wrapped in one of Cole Porter's most magical scores. Music, dance, laughs and the age-old tale of boy meets girl. Anything **Goes** is delightful, delicious and de-lovely. Coming to the San Diego Musical Theatre stage in Kearny Mesa from Friday, February 10 through Sunday, March 12.

 $\textbf{Omri Schein} \ is \ making \ his \ San \ Diego \ Musical \ The a tredirectorial \ debut \ for this \ production \ and \ an$ tion of Anything Goes. Omri is an acclaimed performer, lyricist, playwright and director.

"Anything Goes is pure, pleasurable fun. My taste preference tends to lean more to the dark, irreverent and/or the bizarre or quirky. But sometimes living in that world too long can take its toll on you; every once in a while, one just needs to have a good time. Comedy is also usually what I do and my forte, so with this specific show I think the shoe will fit quite snugly. I'll let you decide, though." Schein said.

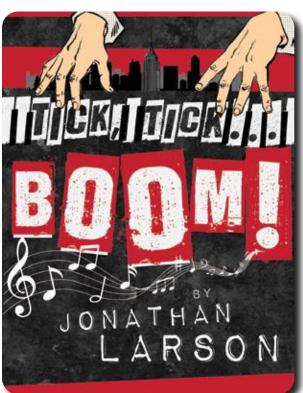
The production will also feature some of San Diego's favorite stage performers. Including Allison Spratt Pearce as Reno Sweeney, Anthony Michael Vacio as Billy Crocker,





JONATHAN LARSON MUSICAL OPENS ICT'S 2023 SEASON

Before there was Rent, there was tick, tick... BOOM! International City Theatre will open its 2023 season with a pop/rock musical by Jonathan Larson about the courage it takes to follow one's dreams. The director is Kari Hayter, and music director Anthony Zediker helms the live band. tick, tick... BOOM! Will debut **Friday, February 17** at ICT's home in the Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center.



tick, tick... BOOM! is Larson's funny, moving, autobiographical work about an aspiring composer trying to write the great American musical, even as time and life seem to pass him by. Originally written and performed by Larson as a musical monologue, the show was adapted into a three-person musical by playwright David Auburn (Proof) after Larson's death. The result is a revealing look at the man who would go on to posthumously receive three Tony Awards and the Pulitzer Prize for Drama for his revolutionary rock musical, Rent.

Jon (Ernesto Figueroa) is an aspiring composer living in SoHo and waiting tables, his first big break on the horizon but always out of reach. His best friend (Phillip J. Lewis) is making big bucks on Madison Avenue, and his girlfriend (Samantha M. Lawrence) wants to get married and move out of the city. But Jon continues to hold fast to his dreams — even as he questions his life choices on the eve of his 30th birthday.

Larson began developing the solo work in 1990, performing at Second Stage Theatre, $the \ Village\ Gate\ and\ New\ York\ The atre\ Workshop.\ Auburn's\ revamped, three-actor\ version$ premiered off-Broadway in 2001, winning the Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Off-Broadway Musical. Since then, the show has had numerous productions including in London's West End, two off-Broadway revivals, and a U.S. tour. In 2021, it was adapted into a film by playwright Steven Levenson (Dear Evan Hansen) that starred Andrew Garfield and was directed by Lin-Manuel Miranda.

A brilliant, groundbreaking creator of musical theatre, Larson died of an aortic aneurysm on January 25, 1996 — 10 days before his 36th birthday and one day before the off-Broadway premiere of *Rent* at New York Theatre Workshop. A trailblazing rock opera based on La Bohème, Rent would go on to claim the 1996 Pulitzer Prize for Drama as well as the Tony Award for Best Musical. Larson had been the recipient of the 1994 Richard Rodgers Award and twice received the Gilman & $\mathsf{Gonzales}$ - Falla $\mathsf{Theatre}$ $\mathsf{Foundation}$'s $\mathsf{Commendation}$ Award . ictlongbeach.org

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JEREMY MCQUEEN

HIGHLIGHTS GRIEF AND IMPRISONMENT WITH INSPIRATIONAL

BLACK IRIS PROJECT



horeographer Jeremy McQueen spent a lifetime envisioning what it would be like to make a radical change in the world and inspire the younger generations to take action. In 2016, he started The Black Iris Project, which takes Black-centric works and arts education, and blends it in with premier ballet.

A San Diego native, McQueen got his first taste of the stage at age 8 when his mom took him to a *Phantom of the Opera* performance at the Civic Theatre. He credits seeing that live show as a pivotal moment in his life, and is appreciative his parents took him to see shows. They had grown up poor in Alabama, but wanted to expose their children to everything they couldn't experience during their formative years.

As he grew older, McQueen said he was inspired by those who had left San Diego and gone on to make something of themselves. "It was really inspiring to me to be able to hear the stories of those from my own kind of neighborhood or my own city that would come back and talk of their experiences and just remind me of what is possible," he said. "Growing up, I kind of always felt like most of my peers or my older peers kind of stayed close to home. Not a lot of people really ventured outside of San Diego for college."

McQueen took a leap of faith and headed to New York in 2004 to pursue his dreams. There, he graduated with a bachelor's degree from the Alvin Ailey School at Fordham University and hustled around, getting cast in various Broadway productions to gain experience.

"I always knew at a young age that I really wanted to be able to create those same type of dynamic pictures and stories that I saw on stage," he said. "I wanted to provide that same source of inspiration and visibility to other people, especially young people of color."

The ultimate creation of the Black Iris Project in 2016 was meant to reflect "the true diversity of our world, not just creating ballets that cater to a particular demographic, or kids, or particular race," McQueen said. It was initially inspired by the breast-cancer treatment McQueen's mother endured, as well as other personal things going on in his life.

San Diegans can see two ballets: *A Mother's Rite* and *Wild*. *A Mother's Rite* chronicles the story of a Black mother's journey through various stages of grief after losing her son to police brutality. The 40-minute ballet set to Stravinsky's "Rite of Spring" allows the examination of the mental-health process and the effects of trauma.

"Often, you know, there's various occurrences that have happened in our country and it feels as though we move from one headline to the next," McQueen said. "These are real people whose

lives are forever changed by these singular moments.

And even though these camera crews have left and moved on, these families are still dealing with all of this mentally, physically and emotionally."

Wild started as a film series created during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. It's based on a combination of an inspirational visit to the Equal Justice Initiative in Alabama that had McQueen wanting to parallel the popular Where the Wild Things Are children's book with stories of young people imprisoned in detention centers around the country. The original four-part film series ultimately won an Emmy Award. To bring the idea to life, McQueen teamed up with Richard Ross, a photographer behind the portrait that initially inspired the show.

McQueen said *Wild* is The Black Iris Project's most popular and controversial work to date, and a number of original pieces of music were created specifically for different portions of the story.

On coming home, McQueen said he's excited to showcase "what the power of the imagination can do."

Those hoping for an encore, however, can put that desire to rest. "This is one night only," McQueen said, noting that he takes care of choreography, administration, writing grants and media outreach all by himself. Until he's able to hire "a more robust staff," this is your only chance to catch the show.

The Black Ir is Project will have its San Diego premiere at the Balboa Theatre on Wednesday, February 8. blackir is project.org/sandiego



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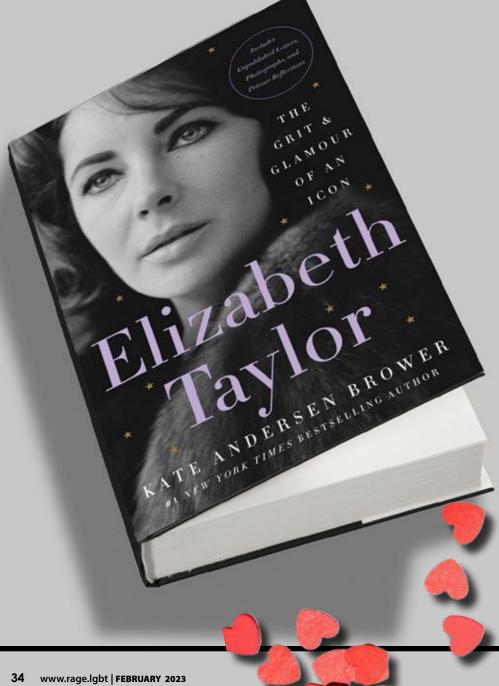


KATE AND ERSEN BROWER

Nothing but love. In the too numerous to mention biographies of Elizabeth Taylor, Kate Andersen Brower tops them all with her book on Dame Elizabeth Taylor. Now mind you, it is "authorized!" Isn't that something? I think so. And "authorized" means that Taylor's sons and daughters, grandchildren and friends authorized this biography too. Now that's quite a responsibility. Kate put this seal of approval to excellent use with her writing talent, research and her heart into creating a biography this is, and you can quote me, "The best goddamn book on Elizabeth that has ever been written! Total." How about that?

As a film historian, may I say that Elizabeth Taylor has rocked my world since the first time watching her performance in Giant. Cue almost all of her films after that and before; in the minds of millions and me. Magnetic, majestically beautiful and honestly, just a broad you wish you had the privilege of knowing. Her passion for living was unheralded and to be respected, her belief in raising the curtain of awareness on AIDS and her devotion to the men she loved in her life shines as bright as a brilliant white diamond. With so many unpublished thoughts from her life presented here from E.T. and family, it is just like taking a monumental ride and getting to the real destination of who Dame Elizabeth Taylor was.

Available now





MY21STCENTURYBLUES

RAYE

Ahhh, Raye don't wanna feel like she did last night as she wildly puts it in the video for her song called "Escapism." The point is that everyone has felt love and despair, regret and optimism, in figuring out love. Yet Raye has a new musical slant of proving this and more. She knows the ropes of being a woman manufactured by a music label and has stepped out on her own out of that ring of preconceived notions.

Raye, from South London (though soon to travel the globe), is now an independent artist and songwriter, and quite the personality. Leave any comparison in your billfold but to say that she would make Amy Winehouse, Lady Gaga or Madonna proud with her style and talent is the truth. Raye has already earned the accolades and buzz, and though her album is titled *My 21st Century Blues*, she will never let Cupid stop tugging at her heart.

Soft, real and bombastic with an artistic visual style, she mesmerizes in a realistic and tough way of letting her emotions come forth vocally. Let's just say the thrill is NOT gone to reverse just one of her jamming joints of a song titled "The Thrill is Gone." There are several songs that make anyone with a pulse start jumping with a head bopper shake. "Black Mascara" is just one example of the simple art of the club groove of song done with a rapping and sleek Raye radiance. Dancing off the bitterness of love is so right. As her lyrics state, "You're done to me. You made your bed. Lied your lies. And fucked my mind up." With My 21st Century Blues, that's the glory and sometimes that's the story of love and Raye. Available February 3

C'ESTLA VIE

The three members of Hyphen Hyphen — with French-American blonde Santa leading the way along with Adam and Line — make the listener "come on, get happy!" To digress to a Partridge Family song from the 1970s and to address their own identity as a queer electropop group. They are so full of youthful exuberance, songwriting and vocal prowess, especially from vocalist Santa who throws her voice into smooth, scratchy and sullen, angst-filled gears in the blink of a note. They really focus on fine tuning their talents for "That's Life" or as they say in French, c'est la vie.

Santa's vocals have the sonic qualities of P!nk, with a combination Joan Baez/Joni Mitchell quality of tone. The high adrenaline of youth is apparent on several tracks with an anthemic adrenaline pop beat. When Hyphen Hyphen gets in a righteous rock mood, there's no better example than their song "Cry (Cry Cry)" that could have been extended, in my book, as her vocals are off the hook. Yet the emotional punch of Santa's vocals ends too quickly for me. Then "Lie!" parachutes in with even more intensity and like the best of the powerful vocalists, you wonder how long she can maintain the strength performing this live night after night, with the intensity delivered live in the studio. Hyphen Hyphen is bringing their latest musical spins of c'est la vie for a U.S. tour in 2023. What's not to love? **Available now**

HYPHEN#HYPHEN



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SHOPONLANE

OFAN AGES WILL TOUCH ALL AGES

Goran Stolevski's Gay Romantic Drama Makes Its U.S. Debut This Month

ut director Goran Stolevski might yet not be a household name, but just give him a little more time. The 37-year-old filmmaker made a big splash internationally last year with his first feature, *You Won't Be Alone*. He's set to make an even bigger splash this year, especially among gay audiences, with his new movie *Of An Age*. It is scheduled for release in the U.S. by Focus Features on **Friday, February 17**.

The film opens during the summer of 1999. In blue-collar North Melbourne, Australia, 18-year-old Serbian immigrant Kol (played by Elias Anton) is out of school forever. He's preparing for the Australian Dance finals when he receives a distress call from his dance partner, Ebony, who has woken up on an unfamiliar beach after a big night out. With the help of Ebony's older brother Adam (Thom Green), they attempt to make it to the finals on time.

When Kol and Adam get stuck in traffic, however, they begin to realize they have more in common than they first thought. Over the course of the next 24 hours, an unexpected and intense romance blossoms between them. They are separated all too quickly when Adam moves to South America, but will meet again a decade later for Ebony's wedding and a bittersweet reunion.

Of An Age is an authentic, achingly romantic, sexy and moving film. Sensitively directed by Stolevski and beautifully acted by Green and Anton, it will touch any gay men who came of age between the 1990s and the late 2000s. Heck, I could identify with it even though I came out in the 1980s.

Stolevski was born in North Macedonia, where he grew up before his family moved to Australia when he was 12. He completed a bachelor of creative arts degree at the University of Melbourne and a master in film and television at the Victorian College of the Arts. He won the Ruben Mamoulian Best Director Award at the 2016 Sydney Film Festival before attending the Berlinale Talent Campus and MIFF Accelerator as well as

receiving the \$50,000 Lexus Fellowship for his short film, *My Boy Oleg*. His 25 short films have screened at more than 100 festivals across six continents. He also directed three episodes of the International Emmywinning series *Nowhere Boys* before making his feature film debut in 2022.

Though hard at work editing his next LGBTQ-themed movie, Stolevski recently took time to speak with *The RAGE Monthly* via Zoom during a cold winter night here and a sunny summer morning in Australia (given the 16-hour time difference).

In the press notes, you say this isn't really an autobiographical story, yet it feels so authentic. Why do you think that is?

It's not autobiographical in the sense that the events depicted didn't really happen to me and I'm not either of the characters. I don't dance, I'm not a dancer, I've never been to Argentina, but it is a little bit of an emotional diary of what 1999 felt like to me, in the place I found myself in at the time. In my high school years, I was very much kind of absent from my life. I was a massive film nerd at the time and I was sort of really living my life or looking for a life through movies, both what was coming out in cinemas as well as Katharine Hepburn movies. That's what I thought is real life. Day-to-day school and other things happening around me were just things that were kind of gray and a blur. I was thinking back to that time in my life and how it was just a blank of six years, which were my teenage years and high school. And then trying to kind of excavate the feelings of that time, and I kind of felt like for life to have meaning or value it had to be something that was like cinematic, or literary, or artistic. I felt like the life I was living in suburbia was the opposite of cinematic, so I just wanted to write something that honored the kind of people I was around and the kind of place I was in and make it feel cinematic and meaningful.





Would you say you are more like Kol or more like Adam, or both equally?

I don't really know, to be honest. I mean, Kol is me at 14 probably, not really 17. I was militantly and openly gay in my final year of high school, so I'm not that boy. And I've been happily married for almost 20 years. Well, not married legally for 20 years but in a relationship and then we got married. I think there is a little bit of me in both of them. I'm also Adam, mentally anyway. I'm also very much Ebony, to be honest (laughs), so you know it all comes from here ultimately (points to his head). I feel like yes, it comes from my brain and I wrote it but after all that it has its own life, especially once the film was cast. The kids — I call them the kids but they're all adults — I'm very connected to them now. In bringing in the energies of Elias, Thom and Hattie Hook (who plays Ebony), the film wasn't really about my life at that point. But there were surreal moments like turning up to a unit and seeing a sea of vans and catering trucks outside the house that I grew up in, because that's where we needed to park that day.

Your husband was reportedly very moved by your initial script. What does he think of the finished film? I'm assuming he's seen it by now.

Yeah. You know, it was 1 a.m. (when he was first inspired to write the story) but I jumped out of bed and started typing frantically. The first 75 minutes of the film, including most of the dialogues, were written in that one early morning sitting. The writer-director's usual process is to let an idea gestate and not write until it's cohered into a world and a story in his head, so the experience was new and exhilarating. The story flooded out of me. The next day I started writing it out as a screenplay. I wrote all the 1999 time period scenes in a week, in a stream, and then realized the script was only 75 pages and no one's going to make this film (laugh).

The next day I thought: "Fuck it, I'm just going to write another 25 minutes in 2010," and I did that next day. That was the screenplay I sent to my husband, and he became very emotional. I thought at that point that maybe it's good. Normally, he's very blunt with me, and he didn't say anything bad. He's seen the movie a hundred times now and loves it, even though he's an asshole (said sarcastically with a laugh).

You mentioned that you watched a lot of movies starring the great Katharine Hepburn while you were growing up. Can you say a little more about that?

I make this joke all the time: My friends growing up were Katharine Hepburn and Ingmar Bergman. I didn't have any friends in real life, and I was in this limbo state waiting for life to begin. When I completed the script (for *Of An Age*), I realized that no, life was going on then and there. I felt like I had not missed out on it, but I wasn't present in it. So this film would be about being present in that moment so that I feel like I lived it to its fullest. I do believe art is what makes life important, so I think that's the motivation to capture some of it so it doesn't go away.

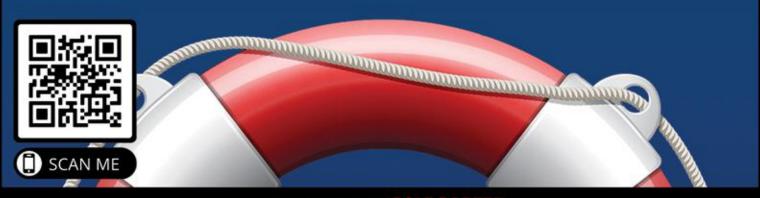
What do you hope young gay or queer men today will take away from Of An Age?

That their feelings are universal. That we all have stories worth telling; all our lives can be cinematic. That we are all connected across generations. The experience of filming it was mind blowing, soul expanding, so that was enough in itself. I hope they can feel that. I think (the movie) really captures what I set out to capture: what a deep connection feels like and can feel like, and how rare that is and to appreciate it.

focusfeatures.com/of-an-age



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THE CROW SHOW

San Diego gallerist **Patric Stillman** has announced the ninth annual The Crow Show exhibition at The Studio Door in Hillcrest. The exhibition will kick off on **Thursday, February 2**, in conjunction with Hillcrest's First Thursdays in Mural Alley. The gallery will be open until 9 p.m. as the alley is filled with live music, vendors and a bar open to the public. A traditional gallery reception with the artists will be on **Saturday, February 11** from 6 to 9 p.m. in the gallery.

"The Crow Show has become a San Diego tradition showcasing both local and national artists creating artworks featuring our feathered neighbors. It has become our most popular exhibits with patrons and artists alike," Stillman said.

The Crow Show's 2023 juror is **Marie McGhee**, the Arizona Sonora Desert museum director. "To no one's surprise, McGhee has done an exceptional job in curating the works, which will be presented in person and online," Stillman said.

With nearly 100 artworks from artists representing 26 states, this year's exhibition will be presented in two parts. Half of the works will be in the gallery, with the other half available to view online. The exhibit will run through **Friday, March 10**. Gallery hours will be Tuesday through Saturday from noon to 7 p.m.

The gallery is also home to 20 exhibiting artists and 17 studio artists. **the studio door.com**













LA ART SHOW

Los Angeles's most extensive and longest-running art fair will return to the Los Angeles Convention Center from **Wednesday**, **February 15 through Sunday**, **February 19** to kick off the city's 2023 art season.

Guided by the leadership of LA Art Show producer and director **Kassandra Voyagis**, the 28th edition will have a more prominent global presence and more ambitious programming than ever before. This year's show will seek to celebrate art — globally and locally — and inspire meaningful dialogue. LA Art Show will donate 15% of all ticket proceeds to support the life-saving work of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

"We're back with a bang," Voyagis said. "I'm blown away by the scope of work represented at this year's show and incredibly honored to help bring it all together. We're welcoming an extraordinary group of diverse global artists and galleries, learning from each other, and sparking important conversations."

This year's fair has a variety of programming intended to inspire meaningful dialogue.

The fair's non-commercial program, and cultural anchor, **DIVERSEartLA**, will return with an ambitious agenda, addressing the global climate crisis. The 2023 edition, curated by **Marisa Caichiolo**, includes eight art institutions, museums and nonprofits presenting an interdisciplinary solo project from video installations and immersive experiences to augmented reality and community-oriented projects. All examine how the environment is represented in art and how humanity's place in the world is depicted.

DIVERSEartLA is the only educational project of its kind in the United States. Featured in 2023 are first-timers and important returning museums like the Museum of Latin American Art (MOLAA) and the Art Museum of the Americas (AMA).

TRANSformation by MRG Fine Art, in partnership with Zero Two 20, promises to be a thought-provoking exhibition, creating an open platform for emerging and established talent of diverse backgrounds. The display proposes that foundational transformation is inherent in the evolutionary process of both artists and society alike and encourages us to glimpse our future through the window of contemporary art. **laartshow.com**

INTERSECT PALM SPRINGS

This art and design fair's second edition welcomes a dynamic mix of 50 contemporary and modern art and design galleries. In addition, five Cultural Partner Projects will feature regional institutions and four Curated Spaces will be devoted to special exhibitions. A robust schedule of talks and events is also planned.

The exhibitor list will include 18 galleries from California, including 13 from Los Angeles and four from the Palm Springs region. In addition, five exhibitors are from New Mexico. East Coast galleries continue to show strength in year two, with 15 from New York and two from Boston.

"For our second edition of Intersect Palm Springs, it has been a true delight to see how engaged and involved our galleries are in the fair's overall programming, from bringing their artists out for booth talks to planning events for community engagement and opportunities for connection. In addition to a great group of returning galleries, it is a pleasure to welcome some exceptional new additions from near and far," said **Becca Hoffman**, managing director of Intersect Palm Springs.

"There are a number of fascinating programs and exhibitions at this year's fair – please join us! To name just a few: Zombie Forest, a show about the plight of Joshua trees and the vital and sensitive desert ecosystem; Desert, Light Art!, a slideshow and lecture by Palm Springs Life's Steven Biller; and a performance and spoken word series curated by Shana Nys Dambrot," said **Dirk von Gal**, president of Intersect Art and Design.

The 2023 edition of Intersect Palm Springs will begin with a VIP opening night preview on **Thursday, February 9**. It will be open to the public from **Friday, February 10 through Sunday, February 12**. A VIP closing brunch will take place Sunday morning and a closing party Sunday afternoon to celebrate the fair and the Super Bowl.

intersectpalmsprings.com













BEYOND KING TUT

Beyond King Tut: The Immersive Experience, an exhibition developed in partnership with the National Geographic Society, will bring the magic and mystery of ancient Egypt to San Diego. The show is now open daily through **Sunday, March 26** at the Wyland Center at Del Mar Fairgrounds. The archives of the National Geographic Society will be brought to life in a multi-gallery journey through the boy king's story.

Beyond King Tut combines the power of cinematic storytelling and soaring imagery to invite visitors into the golden king's world like never before. With nine galleries to explore, wind through the story of a young boy whose name still looms large and how he changed the ancient — and modern — world. View the wonders of modern and ancient Egypt. Meet ancient Egyptian gods like Ra and Anubis before descending into King Tut's burial chamber and joining his quest for immortality. Finally, relive one of the most significant discoveries of all time — the king's tomb with all his treasures waiting inside, reclaimed from the desert sand after 3,000 years.

"Beyond King Tut will be a must-see for anyone interested in Egypt and the history of King Tut," said **Kathryn Keane**, vice president of public experiences for the National Geographic Society. "New technologies are making it possible to fully immerse people like never before in important stories from our past, allowing us to develop connections and understand history's influence on our present and future generations."

"It was such an honor to tour King Tut's treasures around the world, but those objects have returned to Egypt forever. Beyond King Tut brings together some of that same team along with the all-stars of immersive art to present one of the world's most fascinating stories in a whole new way, with no boundaries! Guests will get to experience the splendor of Egypt all around them and voyage with us to the ancient Egyptian afterlife," creative producer Mark Lach said. beyondkingtut.com

SQUARE PEGS, ROUND HOLES AND FITNESS ON A BUDGET

Happy 2023! Does it feel any different than any other day, month or year? It SHOULD, because it's a new beginning. And despite my steadfast desire for many of my fellow humans to give up on "resolutions," I also know that this ritual isn't going anywhere anytime soon. Much like mimosas, brunch and watch parties for RuPaul's Drag Race or Mean Girls, resolutions are here to stay.

First, consider this

We've been through some stuff. We will continue to go through it. Compared to most of the rest of the population, we face increased odds of STIs (surprise!), body image issues, eating disorders, substance abuse,

our own brand of racism and mental-health concerns just to name a few. These challenges aren't going anywhere anytime soon, so our resolutions need to be unique to each of us.

I dare you

Do something a little different with your fitness resolutions. Why? Why not? We're gay! We approach things with unique perspectives compared to the vast majority of the world around us. We're square pegs trying to fit into round holes (get your minds out of the gutter!) and we march to the beat of a different drum. so it should be no different when it comes to our health and fitness.

anything you set your mind to, what matters most is that YOU believe in you. Now, go do your fitness you, live your best, most fabulous, healthiest life and know that yours truly, that gay trainer, stands ready to assist.

All set? Let's work out! Last time, we did PUSH and PULL workouts on a budget. These leaves this to do.

Day 3: The lower body routine

We don't usually spend a lot of time **TWISTING** our bodies, but maintaining this ability and associated strength is still important for our core. (No equipment needed.) Russian twists, oblique crunches (2-3 sets

> of 30-45 seconds) or certain Pilates and yoga moves satisfy this nicely.

HINGING occurs when we bend to pick up something or to look at something on a table or desk. This means you need a strong hinge your BOOTY! Exercises that set your butt on fire are good such as bodyweight or resistance band (from prior workouts) hip hinges/ bridges or deadlifts (3-4 sets, 8-12 reps).

Ever sit on the pot? In a chair? On a couch? Thought so. You're doing **SQUATS**. A strong butt helps, but strong LEGS help more. Bodyweight or resistance band squats (3-4 sets, 8-12 reps) are on the menu.

If you climb steps or stairs, you're **LUNGING!** Lunge exercises are amazing because you work your legs along with your balance and core. Do some bodyweight or resistance band reverse lunges or lateral lunges (2-3 sets, 6-10 reps). Or climb 10 flights of stairs. *wink*

GAIT is simply how we walk, something we definitely take for granted. We can always get better at walking. Step up, over or around an object, practice on uneven or unstable (but safe) surfaces. Really having to use your mind is critical.

In closing, always talk to doc first, warm up before, stretch after, and allow 48 hours between workouts, and visit that gay trainer. com for more and with your questions. Now go create a (free to \$180) healthier 2023 for YOU!



"mainstream." There are many ways to get our exercise and nutrition on. I dare you, DOUBLE dog dare you, TRIPLE dog dare you! Be a little more independent when it comes to your personal health. Try something different when it comes to your exercise. Shift your perception a fraction when it comes to food and how you eat. Do a little more homework instead of blindly following thirst traps and questionable fitness influencers on Instagram or TikTok. Think critically, be

We all own a rainbow cape

curious, ask more questions. You can do it.

Go stand in front of a mirror. Do you realize that marvelous reflection appears every day because of YOU and the superpowers of your gay mind? That reflection does what YOU want it to do, every day. So while I believe you can do



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his time of year, it's common to have a four-letter word on the brain. No, I'm not referring to fuck. Well, depending on who you are and where you're at in life, maybe I am. All joking aside, I'm talking about love. Are you currently floating high on love? If so, my condolences.

Again, I'm joking! If you are in love, good for you, and I wholeheartedly mean that. I'm also optimistic that you celebrate that love or special someone all year long, and not only on February 14 because Hallmark told you to do so.

To settle your mind, the word I want to focus on in this column is *hope*. Can you think of a more powerful word? A more dangerous word? A more addicting word?

Speaking of addiction, some believe that hope is a type of drug, while others think it is an unattainable entity, a waste of time to even try and capture it. The latter is obviously demonstrated in the popular saying, "Shit in one hand, hope in the next, then see which gets filled faster." I used to laugh when hearing this, nodding along, finding it funny and true. However, now it's plain sad, pessimistic and kind of gross. I sincerely hope that no one is out there, shitting in their own hand — or any hand for that matter.

You see, it's my opinion that hope is a necessity, a key ingredient to having a happy,

fulfilled life. Hope keeps us alive; it allows us to keep moving forward. Of course, there is a right way and a wrong way to hope.

For starters, it's important to know the difference between realistic hope and false hope. In all honesty, I have struggled and continue to struggle with these two phrases and their wildly different definitions. As a result, I've set myself up for failure and heartbreak.

Hope is essential, but it's not enough. To just simply hope will almost always end in disappointment, and probably pretty quickly. For hope to work — truly work — we've got to work, and the work isn't always easy. On the contrary, it can be fucking hard. Hope can only take us so far, then it's up to us and the work we've done to finish the job.

Here's a perfect, albeit lame, example: the desire for a hot body. As Britney Spears once said, "You want a hot body, you better work." This is blatantly true. Would Queen B lie to us?

So, what will hoping for a hot body get you? I'll tell you what it won't get you, and that's, well, a hot body. Trust me, I've tried. Yet, when we pair that hope with work, commitment, consistency and tenacity, we're much more likely to get the outcome we've longed to have.

This isn't rocket science. I'm not breaking new ground here. Somewhere, maybe deep, deep down, you already know this all to be

true. Though, if you're like me, you may need the reminder. And, if you're really like me, you may need the reminder a few more times.

It's equally imperative to note that hope, while puissant, falls short against certain things, like the truth.

If a boy doesn't like you, hoping he'll eventually change his mind is completely useless. OK, I'll admit that was another perfect, albeit lame, example. Still, it makes sense, don't you think? Not to mention, why should we squander our hope and the energy that inevitably goes along with it on a situation that we know damned well can't ever be altered? *That's* exactly how we set ourselves up for failure and heartbreak.

Lastly, I want to add that hope is unique for everyone. Specifically, my hope won't look like your hope, your friend's hope or your mom's hope. That's the beauty of this world; we all long for something distinctive. No, we all can long for something distinctive. It's our right.

I've come to realize — and I pray not too late — that every single one of us is on our own journey. While it can be challenging to find those on similar journeys to connect with and surround ourselves with, it's so worth it. Therefore, my hope is that you never give up your search. My hope is that you are able to find your tribe without much struggle.

My hope is that you never stop hoping.



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