

LAUSD considers banning phones

Board members say barring devices would reduce anxiety and bullying and boost student achievement.

By Howard Blume

Los Angeles school officials, fed up with kids distracted by social media and concerned about abuses such as cyberbullying, are poised to join a growing number of school systems across the country that are banning the use of cell-phones during the school day.

The hope is that a ban would lead to improved learning, less bullying, distraction and anxiety — and more meaningful communication with peers and adults.

Some parents, however, want their children to have cellphones for safety and communication, and school administrators say the ban could be difficult to enforce.

The proposal was spearheaded by Los Angeles Unified School District board member Nick Melvoin.

“It’s been something I’ve been thinking about for years as I’ve just walked around campuses and seen kids on their phones and in class with their AirPods in,” said Melvoin.

Co-sponsoring the resolution are board President Jackie Goldberg and board member Tanya Ortiz Franklin. A fourth vote is required to pass the measure in the seven-member body.

The resolution would not immediately put a ban into effect. It directs staff to “develop and present to the public” policies that would prohibit student use of cell-phones and social media “during the entire school day,” including lunch and breaks. Input would be solicited from “experts in the field, labor partners, staff, students and parents,” and details would come back to the school board for approval within 120 days.

Elements to be worked out include different approaches for various age groups and a range of technologies, such as smart-

[See Cellphones, A5]



A CAL FIRE helicopter drops water on the Lisa fire near Beaumont, one of more than 15 that ignited across California over the weekend.

Budget talks go private as deadlines loom

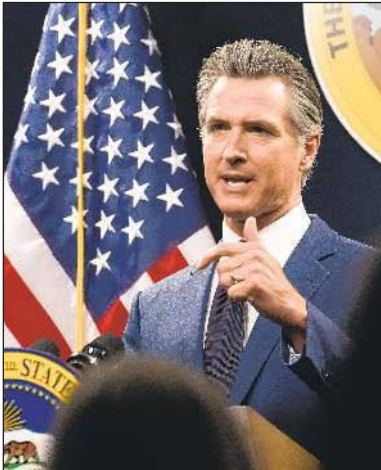
State officials meet behind closed doors as they grapple with competing interests on spending plan, ballot measures

By Laurel Rosenhall, Taryn Luna, Mackenzie Mays and Anabel Sosa

SACRAMENTO — With hundreds of thousands of Californians losing homeowners insurance as companies pull out of an increasingly tinder-dry state, political leaders in Sacramento have spent the last two years trying to figure out how to solve the crisis.

Yet even though they’ve held a raft of public hearings and workshops on potential new laws and regulations, another plan is germinating behind closed doors. A select group of Democratic senators recently began discussing insurance issues privately on Zoom — with no public notice of their meetings, no public agenda and no opportunities for anyone other than invited guests and lobbyists to participate.

The arrangement is legal because the California Legislature exempted itself from the state’s open meetings law that other government agencies



GOV. GAVIN Newsom is negotiating with lawmakers and special interests as a June 30 deadline nears for a state budget.

must obey. And it’s not uncommon at the Capitol for politically sensitive disagreements to get resolved behind closed doors.

But the amount of backroom negotiations underway this month is especially intense due to two upcoming deadlines. The governor must sign a balanced state budget by June 30, and the deadline to put measures on the November ballot is June 27. This year’s secret budget conversations are intertwined with deal-making around the 2024 ballot.

“Every year there are pieces of legislation that ignite a firestorm among the public and result in huge amounts of activism in and around the Capitol,” said Jonathan Mehta Stein, executive director of California Common Cause.

“Equally important, or more important, decisions are being made

[See Budget, A7]

POST FIRE IS STATE’S LARGEST OF 2024

Rapid spread of the blaze near Gorman dampens hopes for a subdued season.

By Grace Toohey Hayley Smith and Joseph Serna

Gusty winds, high temperatures and dry air continued to fuel a major wildfire in northern Los Angeles County on Monday that surpassed 15,000 acres burned to become the state’s largest blaze of the year.

The Post fire, burning mostly dry grasses and brush in the Gorman area south of the Tejon Pass, was just 8% contained Monday morning, said Los Angeles County Fire Department spokesperson Craig Little.

“It’s a safe bet that it’s going to grow to be larger at this point,” Little said. “It’s still a wind-driven fire.”

He said the fire had grown a couple of hundred acres since Sunday.

Wind gusts near the fire reached 60 to 65 mph Sunday night, and, although the winds were expected to weaken considerably Monday to about 40 mph, they were likely to increase again at night, said National Weather Service meteorologist Ariel Cohen. Temperatures in the area were forecast to reach the high 80s on Monday with low relative humidity, according to the Fire Department.

“Conditions have continued to support the rapid spread of the wildfire,” Cohen said. Red flag warnings — alerts for dangerous fire conditions — were in effect for the area through at least Tuesday evening, with relative humidity expected to drop into the single digits Tuesday, the weather service warned.

Such severe warnings had also been issued across large swaths of inland California, forecasting winds that carry “the potential for rapid fire spread” from the

[See Fires, A5]

Brutal sex assaults raise alarm in Venice

Deadly rampage fuels debate about mental health and homelessness

By Noah Goldberg

Mary Klein wanted to get in 3,000 more steps.

It was around 10:30 p.m., and the longtime Venice resident and sculptor — who had just finished up at work caring for an elderly couple — hadn’t reached her daily goal of 10,000.

She headed to the canals, parked along Strongs Drive and started to walk. But soon after, she said, she felt someone’s presence behind her. Then everything went black.

About an hour later, another woman was attacked a few hundred feet away.

Police say Anthony Francisco Jones, 29, committed both assaults. He was arrested in San Diego days later.

That night of violence — with its brutality and seeming lack of a motive — has shaken the community. Many had always felt the



VENICE resident Mary Klein suffered a brain injury in an April attack. Another woman was killed.

tourist destination with multimillion-dollar homes perched along the waterways was safe, even when walking alone at night.

But even though violent crime in Venice is down, the fact that police say the suspect is a transient man has heightened years of debate about the neighborhood’s problems with its unhoused population.

Court documents reviewed by The Times reveal the disturbing details of the night of April 6.

Surveillance video from a home in the 2700 block of Strongs Drive captured the assault on Klein. The video — which prosecutors described in a document requesting that Jones be held without bail — shows a man dragging Klein’s body to the gate of a house. He was wearing a light-colored jacket, Nike shoes and a polo shirt.

The man is then seen in the video sexually assaulting

[See Venice, A10]

Wreck’s days are numbered
An Instagram-famous abandoned boat at Point Reyes is targeted for removal.
CALIFORNIA, B1

From great pain will come change
Loss of Betts and Yamamoto will alter the Dodgers’ path toward postseason on number of fronts.
SPORTS, B10

Fast-food chains start ‘value’ war
Amid customer complaints about prices, McDonald’s and its rivals offer special deals.
BUSINESS, A6

Weather
Some sun.
L.A. Basin: 80/61.
B6

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Eating peanuts early may cut allergy likelihood

In studies, consuming them often in the first five years of life brings a 71% reduction.

By CORINNE PURTILL
AND KAREN KAPLAN

Allergist and immunologist Dr. Gideon Lack's first inkling that some peanut allergies might be preventable came more than 20 years ago while he was giving a talk in Tel Aviv.

Lack, a professor of pediatric allergies at King's College London, asked an audience of roughly 200 Israeli allergists how many children with peanut allergies they had treated in the last year. When he asked that question during similar talks in the U.S. and U.K., nearly every hand in the room shot up. To his surprise, only two or three Israeli doctors raised their hands.

He did some research and zeroed in on a key difference: Parents in the U.S. and U.K. were told to not give their infants any peanut products until the age of 3 as a precaution against future peanut allergies. In contrast, puffy peanut snacks were a favorite staple of many Israeli babies' diets.

Lack and colleagues decided to test the theory that early oral exposure could actually prevent children from developing peanut allergies. After tracking hundreds of children from infancy to early adolescence, they recently concluded that babies who eat the stuff early and often in their first five years of life are 71% less likely to be allergic to peanuts at age 12.

The Learning Early About Peanut Allergy (LEAP) clinical trial ultimately overturned the official guidance given to new parents and has potentially prevented countless new cases of a serious and potentially deadly allergy.

"It was revolutionary," said Dr. Rita Kachru, a UCLA allergist and immunologist. "It really completely shifted the paradigm and the understanding of food allergy."

The team recently published the third and final report of their longitudinal study.



PATRICK SISON Associated Press

"IT WAS doubly gratifying because our hypothesis was correct. ... We now have a strategy to prevent — and I would argue, nearly eradicate — the development of peanut allergy in the population," Dr. Gideon Lack said.

In the first phase, whose results were published in 2015, the team recruited 640 babies between the ages of 4 and 11 months deemed at high risk for developing allergies, either because they were already allergic to eggs or had severe eczema.

Half the babies were prohibited from consuming any peanut product in their first five years. The other half had to eat at least 6 grams of peanut protein per week.

At the five-year mark, 13.7% of peanut-avoiding kids who had no sensitivity to peanuts at the start of the trial had peanut allergies by the end.

But only 1.9% of the peanut-eaters in this group did — an 86% relative reduction in peanut allergy risk. For kids who showed some initial sensitivity to peanuts at the start of the test, eating peanuts was associated with a 70% relative reduction in developing a full-blown allergy.

"The results have the potential to transform how we approach food allergy prevention," Dr. Anthony Fauci said at the time. Fauci was then director of the National

Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, which helped fund the study.

In the second phase, the researchers asked 556 participants from the original study to avoid peanuts entirely for a year, to see whether continuous peanut exposure was necessary to prevent allergies from forming. Only a few kids who had previously eaten peanuts without issue developed an allergy after going without them for 12 months.

In the third phase, published last month in the New England Journal of Medicine, the researchers tested 508 children who had participated in the first two studies.

Participants had been free to eat or avoid peanuts as they wished in the six years since they were last

studied. The team found that 15.4% of participants from the group that avoided peanuts in early childhood had peanut allergies at age 12, while only 4.4% of those who ate peanuts early on did.

"It was doubly gratifying because our hypothesis was correct, but more importantly, we now have a strategy to prevent — and I would argue, nearly eradicate — the development of peanut allergy in the population," Lack said over Zoom from London.

Incidence of food allergies began rising sharply in the 1980s, particularly in industrialized Western nations. In 1997, 0.4% of people in the U.S. had diagnosed peanut allergies. Today, about 1.8% do.

Amid the search for ex-

planations, one 1989 study found that infants whose exposure to common allergenic foods was severely restricted in their first two years of life ended up with fewer allergies than those in a control group.

Largely based on that research, in 1998 the U.K. instructed women to not eat peanuts during pregnancy or while breastfeeding if they or their partner had a family history of allergies, and to prevent their child from eating peanuts until the age of 3. The American Academy of Pediatrics adopted similar guidelines in 2000.

After the first two LEAP reports came out, both the American Academy of Pediatrics and British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology issued new guidelines in 2017 incorporating

TV watching linked to senior health

By KAREN KAPLAN

Before you settle in to binge the new season of "The Bear" or watch Team USA go for the gold at the Paris Olympics, think twice about the amount of time you spend on the couch in front of the TV. Your future self may thank you.

A new study by Harvard researchers links the popular pastime of sitting and watching television to the likelihood of reaching one's senior years in a state of good health: the more time spent doing the former, the lower the odds of achieving the latter.

The problem doesn't seem to be with sitting in general. After controlling for a variety of risk factors such as diet quality and smoking history, the researchers found no relationship between time spent in a chair at work and the chances of aging well. Ditto for sitting in cars or at home doing something besides watching TV, such as reading, eating meals or paying bills.

Yet for every additional two hours spent in front of the boob tube, a person's chance of meeting the researchers' definition of healthy aging declined by 12%, according to their study published last week in JAMA Network Open.

That does not bode well for the United States, where 62% of adults between the ages of 20 and 64 say they watch TV for at least two hours a day, as do 84% of senior citizens.

The findings are based on data from more than 45,000 women who participated in the Nurses Health Study. All of them were at least 50 years old and had no major chronic diseases back in 1992, when they answered a slew of questions about their health and what they did all day.

For instance, the nurses were asked how much time they spent standing or walking around at work or at home. They were asked about various types of exercise, including jogging, swimming laps, playing tennis and doing yoga. They were asked whether they mowed their own lawns.



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A STUDY finds that watching TV diminishes the chances of achieving what is called healthy aging.

And they were asked how many hours they spent doing all kinds of sitting.

You might not be surprised to learn that the most popular type of sitting was while watching television. More than half of the women — 53% — said they watched between six and 20 hours of TV a week. (The median among this group was around 15.4 hours per week.) An additional 15% of the women said they watched between 21 and 40 hours of TV each week, and 2% watched even more.

The nurses were tracked for 20 years or until they died, whichever came first. By the end of the study period, 41% of them were still free of 11 major health conditions, including cancer, diabetes, heart failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and multiple sclerosis. In addition, 44% of the nurses were in good mental health, 52% had no memory impairments and 16% had no physical impairments.

Only 8.6% of the women met all four of those criteria, which was what it took to achieve healthy aging.

On the whole, the women who watched more TV tended to be older, were more likely to be smokers or drinkers, consumed more calories and had higher body mass index scores than women who watched less TV. The more devoted TV watchers were also more likely to have high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

Once the researchers accounted for these and a host

of other differences, they found that the women who spent an hour or less each week sitting in front of the TV were the most likely to achieve healthy aging. Compared with them, women who watched TV for two to five hours per week were 9% less likely to be healthy agers; those who watched for six to 20 hours per week were 19% less likely; those who watched for 21 to 40 hours per week were 40% less likely; and those who watched for at least 41 hours a week were 45% less likely.

The researchers also found that replacing TV time with pretty much anything else — including sleep, for women who got no more than seven hours of shut-eye per night — would increase their odds of healthy aging. The more vigorous the new activity, the bigger the boost.

Although the actual percentage of women who succeeded in healthy aging was low, the study authors estimated that an additional 61% of the women could have joined that rarefied group if they had done four things:

- Spent at least three hours per day engaged in light physical activity at work.
- Invested at least 30 minutes a day in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- Kept their weight in the normal range instead of being overweight or obese.
- Limited their TV-watching time to less than three hours a day.

The study didn't show that excess TV time caused any of the nurses to miss out

the results. They now advise children at greater risk of developing a food allergy — those with eczema, egg allergies or both — to start eating peanut products between 4 and 6 months.

For children without risk factors, the AAP says, peanuts can be introduced whenever the baby starts eating solid foods.

"Previous guidance and recommendations prior to the LEAP study, where we were just avoiding peanuts because we were afraid of peanut allergy, was completely thrown out the window," said Dr. Jenny Lee, a UC Irvine allergist and immunologist. "It changed the way that we practice."

Nine years after the initial findings were published, there are signs that the approach is preventing new allergy diagnoses. In Australia, where guidelines also now encourage early peanut consumption, a large study published in 2022 found that 2.6% of 1-year-olds were allergic to peanuts in 2018-2019, compared with 3.1% in 2007-2011.

Despite the strong evidence, the updated AAP guidelines haven't translated into clear communications to all parents that early peanut introduction prevents allergies, said Dr. Katie Marks-Cogan, an allergist and immunologist who practices in Culver City.

Marks-Cogan says she asks parents of children with newly diagnosed food allergies if their pediatrician talked to them about early introduction of allergenic foods. Most of the time, they say no.

"They will still say ... 'Aren't you supposed to wait until a year for milk, and three years for tree nuts and peanuts?' So a lot of parents still think that, and it's because it's slow to change things in medicine," Marks-Cogan said. "Introducing early is actually safer and it's better."

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THE WORLD



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ISRAELI Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, left, with the other two members of the war Cabinet formed after Hamas' Oct. 7 attack, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant and former military chief Benny Gantz.

Netanyahu disbands war Cabinet after key partner quits coalition

Departure of centrist Benny Gantz leaves Israeli premier more beholden to far right.

By TIA GOLDENBERG

TEL AVIV — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu dissolved the influential war Cabinet that has overseen the fighting in Gaza, a government spokesperson said Monday, days after a key member of the body bolted from the government over frustration with the Israeli leader's handling of the war.

The move was widely expected after the departure of Benny Gantz, a centrist former military chief. Gantz's absence from the government increases Netanyahu's dependence on his ultranationalist allies, who oppose a cease-fire. That could pose an additional challenge to the already fragile negotiations to end the eight-month war in Gaza.

Government officials said Netanyahu would hold smaller forums for sensitive war issues, including with his security Cabinet, which includes far-right governing partners who oppose cease-fire deals and have voiced support for reoccupying Gaza.

The war Cabinet was formed in the early days of the conflict, when Gantz, then an opposition party

leader and Netanyahu rival, joined the coalition in a show of unity after the Oct. 7 attack on southern Israel by Hamas. Gantz demanded that a small decision-making body steer the war, in a bid to sideline far-right members of Netanyahu's government. It was made up of three members — Gantz, Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant.

The move to scrap the war Cabinet comes as Israel faces more pivotal decisions. Israel and Hamas are weighing the latest proposal for a cease-fire in exchange for the release of hostages seized by Hamas during its attack. Israeli troops are still bogged down in the Gaza Strip, fighting in the southern city of Rafah and against pockets of Hamas resurgence elsewhere, in addition to a dramatic escalation last week on the northern border with Lebanon.

After launching hundreds of rockets and drones from Lebanon in some of the most intense barrages in the conflict, the militant group Hezbollah sharply reduced the number of projectiles fired toward northern Israel on Sunday and Monday.

The lull continued even after Israeli military officials said they killed a key operative in Hezbollah's rocket and missile department, Mohammed Ayoub, in a drone attack Monday morning. The Israeli military said it tracked just two missiles fired Monday from Lebanon,

and they did not enter Israeli territory. In the last 48 hours, there were just six launches, down from more than 200 on Thursday.

The lull could be due to the Muslim feast of Eid al-Adha that began Sunday morning, as well as a visit from Amos Hochstein, a senior advisor to President Biden. Hochstein is in Israel to discuss the volatile situation along the Lebanon-Israel border. He is scheduled to be in Beirut on Tuesday.

The U.S. has been trying to ease tensions along the frontier, and Hochstein made several trips to the region in recent months. Hezbollah began attacking Israel almost immediately after the Israel-Hamas war erupted, and daily exchanges of fire have been commonplace since then. In recent weeks, the exchanges have intensified, with fires breaking out on both sides of the border.

Netanyahu has played a balancing act throughout the war, weighing pressure from Israel's top ally, the U.S., and growing global opposition to the fighting, as well as from his government partners, chief among them Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich and National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir.

Both have threatened to topple the government should Israel proceed with a cease-fire deal. The latest proposal is part of the Biden administration's most con-

centrated push to help wind down the war. For now, progress on a deal appears to be stalled.

Critics say Netanyahu's wartime decision-making has been influenced by the ultranationalists in his government and by his desire to remain in power. Netanyahu denies the accusations and says he has the country's best interests in mind.

Gantz's departure, while not posing a direct threat to Netanyahu's grip on power, rocked Israeli politics at a sensitive time. The popular former military chief was seen as a statesman who boosted Israel's credibility with its international partners at a time when Israel finds itself at its most isolated. Gantz is now an opposition party leader in parliament.

The decision by Gantz prompted another resignation: Former army chief and fellow party member Gadi Eisenkot also left the war Cabinet, where he had observer status.

Netanyahu's government is Israel's most religious and nationalist ever. In Israel's fractious parliamentary system, Netanyahu relies on a group of small parties to help keep his government afloat. Without the support of Gantz's party, the prime minister is expected to be more beholden to far-right allies.

Goldenberg writes for the Associated Press.

Russia sets date in June for trial of U.S. reporter

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOSCOW — The espionage trial in Russia of Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich will begin on June 26 and will be held behind closed doors, a statement from the court that will hear the case said Monday.

Gershkovich, a U.S. citizen, has been behind bars since his March 2023 arrest and faces 20 years in prison if convicted.

The trial is to be held in the Sverdlovsk regional court in Yekaterinburg, Russia's fourth-largest city, where he was arrested. Gershkovich has since been held in Moscow's Lefortovo Prison, about 870 miles to the west.

The court said the trial will be closed to the public, as is usual in espionage cases.

Gershkovich, 32, is accused of "gathering secret information" on orders from the CIA about Uralvagonzavod, a facility that produces and repairs military equipment, the prosecutor general's office said last week in the first details of the accusations against him.

The reporter, his employer and the U.S. government have denied the allegations, and Washington designated him as wrongfully detained.

Russia's Federal Security Service alleged that Gershkovich was acting on U.S. orders to collect state secrets but provided no evidence to back up the accusations.

"Evan has done nothing wrong. He should never have been arrested in the first place. Journalism is not a crime," U.S. State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said last week. "The charges against him are false. And the Russian government knows that they're false. He should be released immediately."

The Biden administration has sought to negotiate Gershkovich's release, but Russia's Foreign Ministry said Moscow would consider a prisoner swap only after a trial verdict.

Uralvagonzavod, a state tank and railroad car factory in the city of Nizhny Tagil, about 75 miles north of Yekaterinburg, became known in 2011-12 as a bedrock of support for President Vladimir Putin.

Plant foreman Igor Kholmanskikh appeared on Putin's annual phone-in pro-

gram in December 2011 and denounced mass protests occurring in Moscow at the time as a threat to "stability," proposing that he and his colleagues travel to the Russian capital to help suppress the unrest. A week later, Putin appointed Kholmanskikh to be his envoy in the region.

Putin has said he believes a deal could be reached to free Gershkovich, hinting he would be open to swapping him for a Russian national imprisoned in Germany. That appeared to be Vadim Krasikov, who is serving a life sentence for the 2019 killing in Berlin of a Georgian citizen of Chechen descent.

Asked by the Associated Press about Gershkovich, Putin said the U.S. is "taking energetic steps" to secure his release.

He told international news agencies at an economic forum in St. Petersburg in early June that any such releases "aren't decided via mass media" but through a "discreet, calm and professional approach."

"And they certainly should be decided only on the basis of reciprocity," he added, in an allusion to a potential prisoner swap.

Gershkovich was the first U.S. journalist taken into custody on espionage charges since Nicholas Daniloff in 1986 at the height of the Cold War. Gershkovich's arrest shocked foreign journalists in Russia, even though the country had enacted increasingly repressive laws on freedom of speech after sending troops into Ukraine.

Alsu Kurmasheva, a reporter for U.S.-funded Radio Liberty/Radio Free Europe with dual U.S.-Russian citizenship, has been jailed since October awaiting trial on charges of failing to register as a foreign agent while collecting information about the Russian military.

The son of Soviet emigres who settled in New Jersey, Gershkovich is fluent in Russian and moved to the country in 2017 to work for the Moscow Times newspaper before being hired by the Wall Street Journal in 2022.

U.S. Ambassador Lynne Tracy, who regularly visited Gershkovich in prison and attended his court hearings, has called the charges against him "fiction" and said that Russia is "using American citizens as pawns to achieve political ends."

EU approves the landmark Nature Restoration Plan

Bill was deadlocked amid farmer protests and opposition from some member states.

By SAMUEL PETREQUIN

BRUSSELS — The European Union on Monday gave final approval to a long-awaited plan to better protect nature in the 27-nation bloc, a divisive issue after months of protests by farmers who argued that environmental and climate laws were driving them toward bankruptcy.

After surviving a razor-thin vote by lawmakers in the summer last year, the Nature Restoration Plan faced opposition from several member states, leaving the bill deadlocked for months.

The law, which aims to restore ecosystems, species and habitats, was finally adopted at a meeting of environment ministers in Luxembourg after rallying the required support from a qualified majority representing 15 of the 27 member states and 65% of the EU population.

Austria's vote in favor of the plan helped break the stalemate.

"This is the final step before this law can enter into force," said the Belgian presidency of the EU Council.

The Nature Restoration Plan is part of the EU's European Green Deal, which

seeks to establish the world's most ambitious climate and biodiversity targets and make the bloc the global point of reference on all climate issues.

Under the plan, member states will have to meet restoration targets for specific habitats and species, to cover at least 20% of the region's land and sea areas by 2030.

"The result of hard work has paid off," said Alain Maron, Belgium's minister of climate transition and environment. "There can be no pause in protecting our environment. The EU Council makes the choice to restore nature in the EU, protecting its biodiversity and our living environment."

Leonore Gewessler, Austria's environment minister, voted for the plan after months of domestic political debate. The move by Gewessler, a member of the Green Party, infuriated the senior partner in Chancellor Karl Nehammer's conservative Austrian People's Party ahead of a national election Sept. 29.

"My conscience tells me unmistakably [that] when the healthy and happy life of future generations is at stake, courageous decisions are needed," Gewessler wrote on the social media platform X.

Ahead of the vote, the chancellery said Nehammer informed the Belgian EU presidency that a vote in favor of the plan by Gewessler would be unlawful, the Austria Press Agency reported.



OMAR HAVANA Associated Press

FARMERS protest EU regulations June 4 in Brussels. They have said environmental laws are harming their livelihoods and strangling them with red tape.

Nehammer's office said after the decision that Austria will file a suit at the European Court of Justice to nullify the vote.

An EU official said that Gewessler's vote was legally binding and that the council's lawyers had confirmed this. The person was not authorized to speak publicly, in line with EU practices.

In the buildup to the EU elections this month that saw a shift to the right, European farmers complained about the many environmental laws governing the way they work, arguing that the rules were harming their

livelihoods and strangling them with red tape.

Under the new law, EU countries will be required to restore by 2030 at least 30% of habitats such as forests, rivers, grasslands, wetlands, lakes and coral beds deemed to be in poor condition. The percentage is set to increase to 60% by 2040 and 90% by 2050. The law also introduces specific requirements for measures to reverse the decline of pollinators.

The main EU agricultural group, COPA-COGECA, said that the plan lacks clear and consistent funding and that the law cannot be im-

plemented on the ground.

Environmental organizations and a coalition of big companies insisted last year that the legislation was crucial to tackle both climate change and nature loss. But the plan lost some of its progressive edge during negotiations because of fierce opposition from the European Parliament's main political group, EPP, which, along with other conservatives and the far right, has said it would undermine food security, fuel inflation and hurt farmers.

As a result, the plan was weakened. For instance, un-

til 2030, member states can prioritize sites designated under the Natura 2000 network, which covers Europe's most valuable species and habitats; there is no obligation to implement the law in other natural areas.

EU countries must restore at least 30% of drained peatlands by 2030, but the target for rewetting is set at the national level, meaning individual farmers and private landowners will not be responsible for meeting it.

The law also provides for an emergency brake, as requested by Parliament. Targets for agricultural ecosystems can be suspended under exceptional circumstances if they severely reduce the land needed to produce sufficient food for EU consumption.

The environmental lobbying group Greenpeace said a failure by EU governments to approve the law would have been embarrassing ahead of the next United Nations biodiversity meeting, set for October in Colombia.

"Despite the weakening of the law, this deal offers a ray of hope for Europe's nature, future generations and the livelihoods of rural communities," said Greenpeace biodiversity campaigner Spela Bandelj Ruiz. "Healthy ecosystems offer protection against extreme weather, water shortages and pollution."

Petrequin writes for the Associated Press.

Charges target a top N.J. Democrat

ASSOCIATED PRESS

TRENTON, N.J. — New Jersey’s attorney general has filed racketeering and other charges against influential Democratic power broker George Norcross in connection with government-issued tax credits, according to an indictment unsealed Monday.

Norcross, a former Democratic National Committee member and onetime head of the Camden County Democratic Party, has been an influential figure in state politics. The indictment alleges that Norcross and others got property rights along the Camden waterfront and collected millions of dollars in state-backed tax credits.

At a news conference in Trenton, New Jersey Atty. Gen. Matt Platkin accused Norcross of leading a criminal enterprise in obtaining millions in tax credits and property rights along the Delaware River waterfront in Camden.

Platkin said Norcross told a developer that he had to relinquish his property rights or Norcross would retaliate and make it impossible for the developer to do business in Camden if he refused.

Members of the alleged conspiracy also got a government development agency to help them get leverage in private negotiations, Platkin said.

Norcross sat in the front row during the news conference, steadily watching the attorney general as he detailed the criminal counts against him. Asked what he made of Norcross’ presence in the room Monday, Platkin said he had no comment.

Michael Critchley, Norcross’ attorney, stood to try to ask the attorney general a question, but Platkin left before Critchley could do so. The Associated Press left a message seeking comment from Critchley.

The indictment alleges that Norcross and his associates “used their political influence to tailor New Jersey economic development legislation to their preferences. After the legislation was enacted in September 2013, members and associates of the Norcross Enterprise conspired to, and did, extort and coerce others to obtain ... properties and property rights on the Camden, New Jersey waterfront and associated tax incentive credits.”

Universities violated Title VI, feds say

Inquiries find Michigan and CUNY fell short in preventing hostile climates amid protests

By COLLIN BINKLEY AND ANNIE MA

WASHINGTON — The University of Michigan and the City University of New York did not adequately investigate whether campus protests in response to the Israel-Hamas war and other incidents created a hostile environment for students, faculty and staff, according to the results of investigations by the U.S. Education Department that were announced Monday.

These are the first investigations to reach conclusions among dozens launched by the Education Department since Oct. 7, the day Hamas carried out a surprise attack on Israel.

The department’s Office of Civil Rights investigated 75 instances of alleged discrimination and harassment at the University of Michigan based on shared Jewish ancestry and shared Palestinian or Muslim ancestry. The investigation found that the university’s responses did not meet its Title VI requirements to remedy the hostile environment.

In one instance, when a Jewish student reported being called out for viewing a graduate student instructor’s social media post about pro-Palestinian topics, the university told the student that “formal conflict resolution is not a path forward at this time,” because the incident occurred on social media.

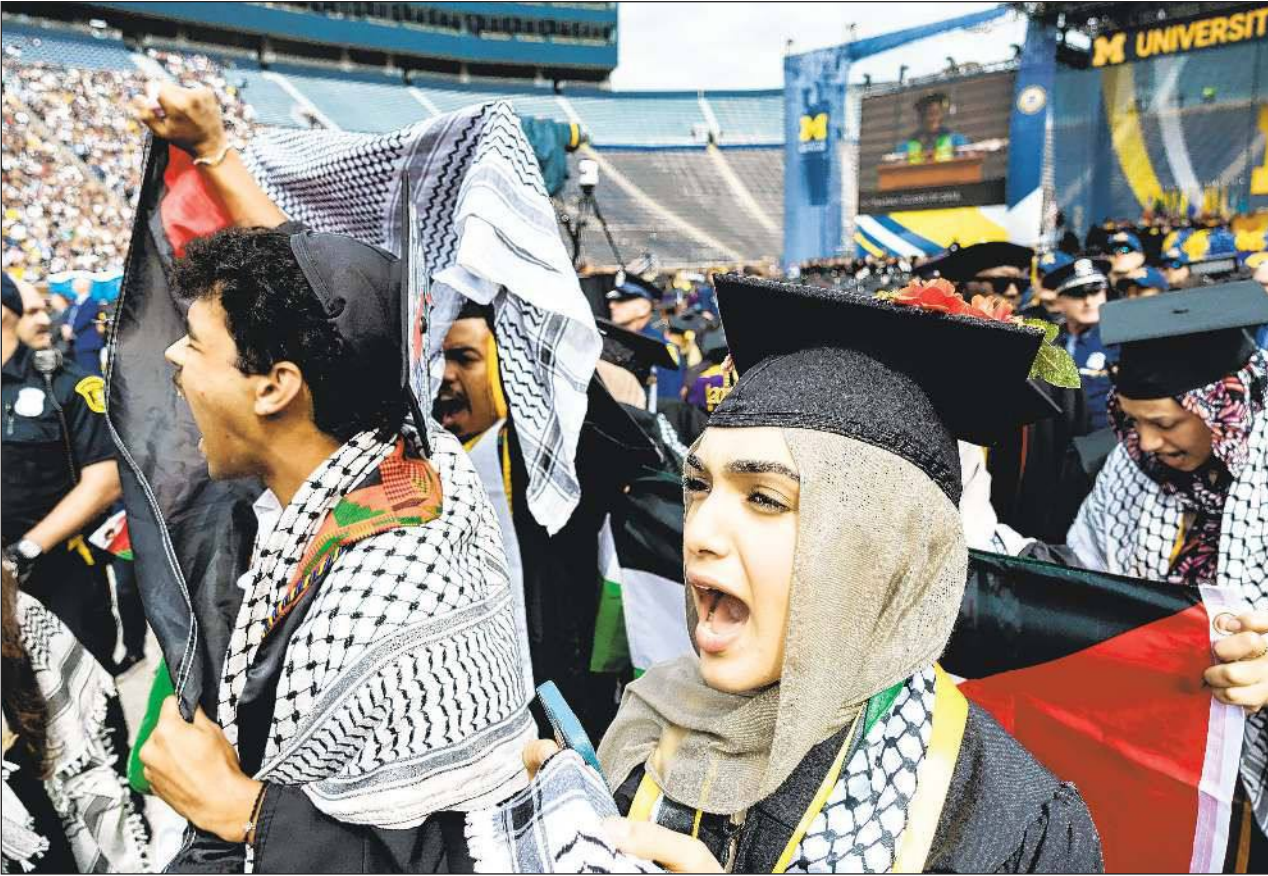
In another instance, when a student who participated in a pro-Palestinian protest was called a “terrorist,” the university said it held “restorative circles” to address the incident but did not take further action.

In its resolution agreement, the University of Michigan agreed to administer a climate assessment, implement additional training and revise its policies as necessary. It also agreed to monitoring by the Office of Civil Rights through the end of the 2026 school year, reporting its responses to future incidents of discrimination to the department.

The Education Department also announced the resolution of nine pending complaints against schools in the City University of New York system, dating to the 2019-20 academic year.

Those incidents include harassment and disparate treatment of students based on shared Jewish, Palestinian, Arab, Muslim or South Asian ancestry.

The university system agreed to reopen or initiate



JACOB HAMILTON Associated Press

PRO-PALESTINIAN students demonstrate during the University of Michigan’s commencement ceremony. The U.S. Education Department investigated 75 cases of alleged discrimination and harassment at the school.

investigations into discrimination complaints and provide the Office of Civil Rights with the results and report any remedial action. The resolution also included increased training for employees and security officers on campus, as well as a climate survey and third-party review of policies to prevent discrimination.

The University of Michigan and CUNY did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Complaints of antisemitism and Islamophobia have led to inquiries at more than 100 U.S. universities and school districts, including Harvard and Yale, community colleges and public schools from Los Angeles to suburban Minneapolis.

The complaints vary widely, but all accuse schools of violating Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination based on race, color or national origin. Colleges and schools are required to protect students from discrimination, and when they don’t, the Education Department can invoke penalties up to termination of federal money.

Protests over the Israel-Hamas war upended the final weeks of the school year at many campuses, with some canceling graduation ceremonies or moving classes online after pro-Palestinian protesters set up encampments.

The protests have tested schools as they aim to balance free speech rights and the safety of students.

The Education Department has issued guidance detailing schools’ responsibilities around Title VI, but the results of the agency’s investigations could provide a clearer line showing where political speech crosses into harassment.

Finding that boundary has been a struggle for colleges as they grapple with rhetoric that has different meaning to different people. Certain chants commonly used by pro-Palestinian activists — including “from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free” and “intifada revolution” — are seen by some as antisemitic.

Meanwhile, some complaints say Arab and Muslim students faced abuses, only to be ignored by campus officials. At Harvard, the Education Department is investigating separate complaints over alleged antisemitism and alleged Islamophobia.

“Hate has no place on our college campuses — ever,” Education Secretary Miguel Cardona said in a statement. “Sadly, we have witnessed a series of deeply concerning incidents in recent months. There’s no question that this is a challenging moment for school communities across the country.”

More investigations are

expected to be resolved in the coming weeks, but Cardona said his agency is struggling to keep up with the influx of cases.

Republicans have rejected requests to increase money for the Office for Civil Rights in recent years, while the average caseload increased to 42 per investigator in 2023. Without more money, that could increase to more than 70 cases per investigator, Cardona has said.

“We are desperately in need of additional support to make sure we can investigate the cases that we have in front of us,” Cardona told members of the House in May.

On average, cases take six to eight months to resolve. The vast majority of the agency’s civil rights investigations end with voluntary resolutions. Schools usually promise to resolve any lingering problems and take steps to protect students in the future.

While the Education Department investigates, several colleges and school districts have separately been called before Congress to answer allegations of antisemitism. Republicans have held a series of hearings on the issue, grilling leaders accused of tolerating antisemitism.

The hearings contributed to the resignations of some college leaders, including Liz Magill at the Uni-

versity of Pennsylvania and Harvard’s Claudine Gay, who was also embroiled in accusations of plagiarism.

Binkley and Ma write for the Associated Press.

Change to Title IX blocked by judge

ASSOCIATED PRESS

FRANKFORT, Ky. — A federal judge on Monday temporarily blocked the Biden administration’s new Title IX rule expanding protections for LGBTQ+ students in six additional states, dealing another setback for a policy that has been under legal attack by Republican attorneys general.

U.S. District Judge Danny C. Reeves referred to the regulation as “arbitrary in the truest sense of the word” in granting a preliminary injunction blocking it in Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia. His ruling comes days after a different federal judge temporarily blocked the new rule from taking effect in Idaho, Louisiana, Mississippi and Montana.

The ruling Monday in Kentucky was applauded by the state’s GOP attorney general, Russell Coleman, who said the regulation would undermine equal opportunities for women.

“The judge’s order makes clear that the U.S. Department of Education’s attempt to redefine ‘sex’ to include ‘gender identity’ is unlawful and beyond the agency’s regulatory authority,” Coleman said in a statement.

The decision was blasted by the Fairness Campaign, a Kentucky-based LGBTQ+ advocacy group. Chris Hartman, its executive director, said the ruling “ignores basic truths about the transgender community and further places in the crosshairs transgender kids, who are among our smallest and most vulnerable populations.”

The two cases are among at least seven backed by more than 20 Republican-led states fighting President Biden’s rule. Set to take effect in August, the policy expands Title IX civil rights protections to LGBTQ+ students, expands the definition of sexual harassment at schools and colleges, and adds safeguards for victims.

In another lawsuit, the U.S. Education Department asked a federal judge in Missouri to deny a request for a preliminary injunction against the new rule. The lawsuit was filed last month by the Republican attorneys general of Arkansas, Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota.

Maryland moves to pardon marijuana convictions

Governor signs an executive order that will affect more than 175,000 cases in state.

By BRIAN WITTE

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Maryland Gov. Wes Moore on Monday ordered more than 175,000 pardons for marijuana convictions, saying the “most sweeping state-level pardon in any state” will help reverse harms from the past caused by the war on drugs.

During a news conference, Moore said the executive order will affect “tens of thousands of Marylanders” convicted of misdemeanors. Some may have had more than one conviction pardoned through the process.

“We are taking actions that are intentional, that are sweeping and unapologetic, and this is the largest such action in our nation’s history,” Moore, a Democrat, said.

Though the pardons will not result in anyone being released from incarceration — nor will they result in having past convictions automatically expunged from a person’s background check — advocates praised the move as a way of removing barriers to housing, employment or educational opportunities based on convictions for conduct that is no longer illegal.



BRIAN WITTE Associated Press

GOV. Wes Moore’s order Monday provides a fresh start to Marylanders with misdemeanor convictions.

Heather Warnken, executive director of the University of Baltimore School of Law Center for Criminal Justice Reform, described the pardons as “a win for thousands of Marylanders getting a fresh start to pursue education, employment and other forms of economic opportunity without the stain of a criminal conviction.”

Recreational cannabis was legalized in Maryland in 2023 after voters approved a constitutional amendment in 2022 with 67% of the vote. Maryland decriminalized possession of small amounts of cannabis for personal use on Jan. 1, 2023. Now, 24 states and the District of Columbia have legalized recreational cannabis.

“This is about changing

how both government and society view those who have been walked off from opportunity because of broken and uneven policies,” Moore said.

He said “legalization does not turn back the clock on decades of harm that was caused by this war on drugs.”

Moore continued: “It doesn’t erase the fact that Black Marylanders were three times more likely to be arrested for cannabis than white Marylanders before legalization. It doesn’t erase the fact that having a conviction on your record means a harder time with everything, from housing to employment to education.”

Shiloh Jordan, who lost his job on his second day at work after a minor cannabis

conviction appeared in a background check by his employer, attended the news conference. Moore noted that even though Jordan went back to college and now works for the Center for Urban Families in Baltimore, he still had the cannabis conviction on his record.

“Well today, that ends,” Moore said.

Jordan said he was thankful that his experience could be used as a testimony “and offer a lot of change for the people of Maryland.”

“It means a lot, because I know a lot of people that have been convicted for petty cannabis charges, and it really affected their whole way of life and their whole way of thinking,” Jordan said.

Maryland Atty. Gen. Anthony Brown, who attended the news conference, said the action was “long overdue.”

“As a nation, we have taken far too long to correct the injustices of a system that is supposed to be just for all.”

The attorney general also noted the magnitude of the governor’s actions, and he said it was about equity.

“It’s about racial justice. While the order applies to all who meet its criteria the impact is a triumphant victory for African Americans and other Marylanders of color who were disproportionately arrested, convicted and sentenced for actions yesterday that are lawful today.”

More than 150,000 misdemeanor convictions for simple possession of cannabis will be affected by the order, which also will cover more than 18,000 misdemeanor convictions for use or possession with intent to use drug paraphernalia, according to a summary by the governor’s office.

Now that Moore has ordered the pardons, the Maryland judiciary will ensure the individual electronic docket for each case is updated with an entry indicating the conviction has been pardoned by the governor, a process that should take about two weeks, Moore’s office said.

The governor’s order also directs the state corrections department to develop a process to indicate a pardon in an individual’s criminal record, a process expected to take about 10 months to complete.

The pardons absolve people of the guilt of a criminal offense, and individuals do not need to take any action to be pardoned.

A pardon is different from an expungement. Although the judiciary will make a note on the record that the offense has been pardoned, it will still show on the record. Expungement is a process that lets a person ask the court to remove certain kinds of court and police records from public view.

Witte writes for the Associated Press.

Early-season fires raise concerns for rest of year

[**Fires**, from A1]
northern Sacramento Valley through the Antelope Valley.
At least one wildfire ignited Monday, burning about 200 acres in Palm Springs, according to local officials. Crews had not yet contained any part of the fire, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

The precarious conditions kicked up over the weekend, when more than 15 fires sparked across California, burning more than 20,000 acres, the majority of which were not fully contained Monday, according to the Cal Fire website. Several triggered evacuations and damaged buildings, including the Post fire in L.A. County.

There had been predictions for a subdued start for the state's wildfire season this year, given a series of late-season, moisture-heavy storms, but this new spate of fires heightened concerns.

"It's pretty early, and this is a pretty large fire," Little said of the Post fire. "We can always hope, but I'm thinking there's going to be more of this in the future for the summer. ... It's very early for a fire of this magnitude."

Such early-season fires are feeding primarily on heat-dried grasses, the growth of which exploded during two back-to-back wet winters. More dangerous fires that engulf larger trees and plants are likely in store for later this year, said Daniel Swain, a climate scientist at UCLA.

"We could, in fact, see a very active finish to fire season 2024, but we aren't there yet, despite the current activity level," Swain said during a briefing Monday. "This is not yet indicative of really active conditions."

In particular, the forested, high-elevation areas that have endured some of the state's worst wildfires in recent memory are still moist after two strong wet seasons and haven't started



JASON ARMOND Los Angeles Times

CREWS SPRAY down hot spots along Orwin Road in Gorman while battling the Post fire in northern Los Angeles County on Sunday.

to display much wildfire activity.

That could change as conditions get hotter and drier for longer stretches of time, Swain said.

The "transition point" is likely to occur sometime in July at lower elevations and August at higher elevations, with fire activity possibly lasting longer than usual due to two years of vegetation buildup.

"Expect September — and maybe even October and parts of November in some areas — to feature very active fire conditions this season," Swain said, adding that blazes that ignite later in the season could become increasingly intense.

The Post fire on Saturday had already forced about 1,200 people to evacuate from the Hungry Valley Park

and Pyramid Lake areas, not far from the 5 Freeway, according to firefighters.

On Monday, officials also ordered areas south of Pyramid Lake to be evacuated, including the Oak Flats Campground. An evacuation warning was also issued for Paradise Ranch Estates.

The fire has destroyed an auto shop and threatened dozens of other buildings. One person has been injured, Little said.

The mountainous terrain has forced the firefighting effort to rely more heavily on air crews, he said, but high winds have made water drops less effective.

More than 1,100 firefighters and half a dozen helicopters continued to battle the flames Monday. The Ventura County Fire Department and U.S. Forest Serv-

ice were aiding in the effort.

In Sonoma County, the Point fire has burned more than 1,000 acres and several structures south of Lake Sonoma. It was 20% contained Monday morning, according to Cal Fire, after starting Sunday afternoon.

"Fire activity subsided overnight," said Ben Nichols, a division chief with Cal Fire's Sonoma-Lake-Napa Unit. He said winds were forecast to be weaker than Sunday, which officials hoped would improve firefighting conditions and allow crews to strengthen protection near threatened structures.

An evacuation order and warning remained in place for residents near Dry Creek Valley.

In Hesperia, more than 1,100 acres had been burned

by the Hesperia fire, prompting road closures and an evacuation warning. The fire was 30% contained Monday, according to Cal Fire and the San Bernardino County Fire Department.

But one weekend won't predict the state's fate for the rest of fire season, especially given the number of other factors at play, including the current transition from the El Niño weather pattern to La Niña, Swain said.

La Niña is associated with drier conditions along the West Coast and in Southern California in particular. La Niña was last in place during the state's three driest years on record, 2020 through 2022, which also saw the state's biggest wildfire seasons on record.

Climate change is also

driving warmer global temperatures and a thirstier atmosphere, both of which can extract more water from the landscape and pave the way for hotter and faster fires in the West and other arid areas, Swain said.

What's more, the upcoming Fourth of July holiday is often linked to wildfire ignitions, and there is potential for that pattern to repeat this year, he added.

"The good news is increasingly in the rearview mirror," Swain said. "As these conditions continue to rapidly warm up, dry out and get windier, the bad news is that I think that the back half of this season is going to be much more active — with a lot more concerning level of wildfire activity in a lot of areas — than the first half."

LAUSD board considers a ban on cellphones during entire school day

[**Cellphones**, from A1]
watches.

Options under consideration include providing cellphone lockers or pouches that keep devices locked up and inaccessible until they're tapped against a magnetic device upon exiting campus. Technology also could be used to block access to social media platforms.

"More kids are getting phones at younger ages," Melvoin said. "They're bringing them to campus. And then I don't remember as much phone-based drug sales. Or coordinating fights or some of the cyberbullying." Key evidence at confidential expulsion hearings sometimes includes students' text messages, he said.

The policy would go into effect in January 2025.

The largest employee unions did not offer an immediate reaction to the proposal when contacted last week.

One elementary principal said the policy would be overkill that would result in unnecessary work. He said about 25% of his students have smartphones, but they are a problem for fewer than 10; those can be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. The principal spoke not for attribution because he was not authorized to be interviewed.

Another elementary principal noted on the Facebook group Parents Supporting Teachers that she does not "see the need for Apple watches and cellphones on our young students. Now, as a parent of an LAUSD high school student who sometimes walks home, I DO see the need. It is a safety issue. All in all, I think they cause a lot of unnecessary drama on campuses, but need my HS student to have hers."

AnneMarie Fulton noted on the Facebook group that her daughter will be starting middle school "10 miles from our home. I don't want her to not have access to call me if needed. I'm strict on phone usage anyway, but taking that ability to contact away from a child doesn't exactly seem right."

There are also parents

and employees who support the proposal.

Parent Mimi Hess referenced the Jonathan Haidt book "The Anxious Generation," which makes the case that cellphone use is harming middle- and high-schoolers.

"I very much hope that the LAUSD board passes a total cellphone ban in schools," Hess said. "Simply put, they make kids more depressed and just plain dumber."

District high school teacher Terri Derrickson Barraza wrote in a social media post that she "would love to see some type of ban on cell phones BUT ONLY if the district is going to back up the ban with logical consequences. If we are passing a ban with no backbone simply for PR reasons, it just makes my job harder."

The resolution did not specify a penalty, but the most obvious response to a violation would be for a phone to be confiscated for a period of time deemed appropriate.

Although Melvoin acknowledged that his own observations about the harms of cellphones are anecdotal, the board resolution cites research in line with the proposed policy.

The resolution cites a national survey on drug use and health by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration that found that among those born after 1995, anxiety increased 139% from 2010 to 2020, coinciding with the rise in smartphones and social media. The researchers note that a correlation between two trends does not mean that one caused the other.

In addition, the U.S. surgeon general wrote in a 2023 advisory that social media may be linked to a growing mental health crisis among teens.

The resolution also cites a report from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that 16% of U.S. high school students in 2021 said they had been bullied via text message or social media over the previous year.

While social media provide a convenient platform for bullying, it's difficult to

say how much that would change with a school-day cellphone ban, since the devices would be available at other times.

Important to the district's goals are long-standing lessons on "digital citizenship" at all grade levels. All students who are provided online access must participate in an internet safety education program.

Moreover, current policy sets out that "approved social media is to be used at school for educational purposes only and under the direction of a teacher or school leader. Home use of social media on district or personal electronic devices is limited to only sites approved by the district's web filtering system."

The resolution cites a 2016 Common Sense Media survey that found half of teens feel "addicted" to their phones. A 2023 study of 200 students by the same group found that 97% of 11- to 17-year-olds used their phones during the school day.

The resolution also states that there is evidence that "limiting cellphone usage and social media access during the school day increases academic performance and has positive effects on student mental health."

Districts and schools across the country have adopted policies restricting student smartphone use.

In 2023, public schools in Florida began prohibiting student phone use during instructional time and blocking access to social media on district Wi-Fi. Oklahoma, Kansas, Vermont, Ohio, Louisiana and Pennsylvania have introduced similar legislation, according to the resolution.

California Assembly Bill 3216, introduced in February, would require school districts to adopt a policy to limit or prohibit student use of smartphones while at school or under the supervision of a school employee. If passed, the law would go into effect July 1, 2026.

Some students are using cellphones to set up fights, film them and post the footage online. With no access to phones during the day, this misuse could be re-

duced.

"We're finding more and more things are being arranged via Instagram direct message or texting during the school day," Melvoin said.

The April 15 fatal shooting of a Washington Preparatory High School student appears to have been recorded on more than a dozen cellphones. The incident took place a couple of blocks from school.

Students also use cellphones to provide campus accountability, documenting student walkouts, misconduct by adults or poorly maintained or locked bathrooms.

For this reason, anti-police activists have concerns about the proposal.

"In the past, some students have used phones to capture criminalization or police violence like incidents of arrest or pepper-spraying of students at schools, or [to] connect with their parents or lawyers/advocates



MATT CARDY Getty Images

"SIMPLY PUT, they make kids more depressed and just plain dumber," one parent said about cellphones.

when their rights were being violated," said Joseph Williams, the director of Students Deserve, which recruits and assists student activists.

It could be argued that a new resolution is unnecessary, and the real issue is enforcement.

More than three-quarters of the nation's school districts, including L.A. Unified, already prohibit nonacademic cellphone use.

Under existing policy, L.A. Unified prohibits "the use of cellular phones, pagers, or any electronic signal-

ing device by students on campus during normal school hours or school activities, excluding the students' lunchtime or nutrition breaks."

The policy was adopted in 2011, and Melvoin said it needs to be updated.

Under the policy, students are permitted to possess phones, pagers or electronic signaling devices on campus provided they remain "off" and are stored in a locker, backpack, purse, pocket or other place where they are not visible during normal school hours or activities.

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BUSINESS



“I LOOK at this weekend as the start of something bigger,” one industry analyst said after “Inside Out 2” from Walt Disney Co.-owned Pixar opened with a haul of \$155 million at the box office, shattering projections.

‘Inside Out 2’ box office bonanza gives theater owners, studios hope

By SAMANTHA MASUNAGA AND CHRISTI CARRAS

For the first time since Warner Bros.’ “Barbie” took the box office by storm last summer, the team at Shankweiler’s Drive-In Theatre in Orefield, Pa., has been forced to turn dozens of cars away from its 4-acre, 300-space parking lot.

The cause? Huge demand for Pixar’s “Inside Out 2.”

“It was a very hard winter. It was a bumpy spring,” said the drive-in’s co-owner Lauren McChesney. “This has kind of changed everything for us right now.”

For months, theater owners have been lamenting the sorry state of the box office. Ticket sales are down 24% so far this year compared with 2023. Would-be blockbusters, including “Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga” and “The Fall Guy,” have fizzled.

But the success of “Inside Out 2” has brought welcome relief to beleaguered theater owners, as well as Walt Disney Co.-owned Pixar, especially during the all-important summer movie season.

The sequel to 2015’s “Inside Out” notched a massive domestic opening weekend, hauling in \$155 million, shattering prerelease projections that ranged from \$80 million to \$100 million. The movie’s total global box office revenue is now about

\$295 million. “We thought that it would be popular,” McChesney said. “We weren’t actually expecting it to sell out.”

Analysts said the movie’s success provides hope that this year’s box office declines are a reversible trend.

“You never want to get too high after one good weekend, and you never want to get too low after a bad box office weekend, but I look at this weekend as the start of something bigger,” said Eric Handler, media and entertainment analyst at Roth MKM.

Though the movie has been a hit with families, young adults turned out too. Moviegoers ages 18 to 34 accounted for 37% of the opening weekend domestic audience for “Inside Out 2,” Disney said. That demographic has been tough for studios to entice in recent months and suggests Pixar was able to tap into moviegoers’ nostalgia, said Daniel Loria, senior vice president at Boxoffice Co.

“It was able to capture a specific part of the audience that we really haven’t seen over-index so far,” he said.

Last year’s dual labor strikes delayed the release of some anticipated movies, leading to an overall weaker lineup. Though “Inside Out 2” will be a bright spot of success, box office revenue for the second quarter will still likely be down significantly compared with last year, Handler said.

“Things will get better, but we haven’t fully turned the corner yet,” he said. “But there are definitely better days ahead.”

The movie’s success is also a win for famed computer animation studio Pixar, which has had a rough time since the pandemic abruptly cut short its release of “Onward” in 2020 and resulted in its next three titles (“Soul,” “Luca” and “Turning Red”) going directly to streaming on Disney+.

Its first movie back in theaters (“Lightyear”) tanked, and although 2023’s “Elemental” ended up having long legs, the company hasn’t landed a bona fide blockbuster like this since “Toy Story 4” five years ago.

“Half a decade is an entire generation of kids that don’t experience these movies at the movie theater,” said Loria. “So the fact that they were able to create this moviegoing moment ... is hugely valuable for Pixar.”

The combination of “Inside Out 2” and Sony Pictures’ Will Smith and Martin Lawrence-led “Bad Boys: Ride or Die” is a “great springboard” into the rest of the summer season, said Jeff Kaufman, chief content officer at Malco Theatres, a chain with 34 locations across six states, including Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana and Mississippi.

The Memphis, Tenn.-based chain knew from pre-sale numbers that “Inside Out 2” would be big but had

no idea that walk-up ticket sales would also be in such demand, he said.

“People just kept coming,” Kaufman said. “Theaters were prepared, we had enough screens allocated and seats allocated ... but what’s it been, a year? The last one that’s been this big was ‘Barbie,’ so you lose your muscle memory on the operational side going, ‘What do we do with all these people?’”

Kaufman quotes Newton’s law of inertia when it comes to moviegoing habits: An object in motion stays in motion. With the success of “Inside Out 2,” and the strong slate of movies coming after it, he hopes audiences keep returning throughout the fall and holiday season.

There’s reasons for optimism. Universal Pictures and Illumination Entertainment’s family-friendly “Despicable Me 4” and the irreverent R-rated Marvel crossover “Deadpool and Wolverine” are headed to theaters next month. Multiplexes are also anticipating a strong end-of-year showing with heavy hitters such as “Gladiator 2,” “Moana 2,” “Wicked” and “Joker: Foie Deux.”

“It’s safe to call [‘Inside Out 2’] the turning point of 2024,” Loria said. “Without this overperformance, it would be a very different conversation we’d be having in terms of sentiment around the summer box office.”

Food 4 Less workers in state authorize strike

By SUHAUNA HUSSAIN

Nearly 6,000 workers at Food 4 Less locations across California this week voted to authorize a strike if Kroger, the grocery chain’s owner, continues with what they say are labor violations during ongoing contract talks.

The vote comes after several locals of the union, United Food and Commercial Workers, filed multiple claims of unfair labor practices with the National Labor Relations Board in late May. The union has accused Food 4 Less managers of undermining negotiations, surveilling and discriminating against union members, and trying to prevent employees from participating in union activity.

After a five-day voting period ended Friday, union officials announced workers had “overwhelmingly” voted to approve a potential strike. They declined to disclose how many workers had voted in favor and against the authorization.

“Food 4 Less executives have decided to resort to unlawful tactics instead of following federal labor law and treating the bargaining process with the respect and seriousness that it deserves,” the union said in a statement after the vote. “Food 4 Less is trying to intimidate, bully, and strong-arm us into accepting a contract that is less than what we deserve and far less than what their parent company, Kroger, offers to other union grocery workers in the area.”

A spokesperson for Food 4 Less criticized the union’s decision to seek the strike authorization, saying, “It remains our goal to put more money in our associates’ pockets.”

“We’ve remained committed to negotiating in good faith. From the start, our focus has been on reaching an agreement that benefits our hardworking and dedicated associates,” said Salvador Ramirez, corporate affairs manager at Food 4 Less/Foods Co. “We are deeply disappointed that UFCW Southern California chose to leave the bargaining table before contract expiration, rather than working together to prioritize the needs of their members.”

The mandate gives the union’s bargaining committee more leverage at the negotiating table as Food 4 Less officials know the union could call for employees to walk off the job at any time.

Negotiations over a new contract began nearly three months ago and soon became tense, said Kathy Finn, president of UFCW Local 770, which represents grocery workers in Los Angeles, Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties and is among the seven union locals involved in the negotiations.

The union locals last negotiated a contract with Food 4 Less in 2021; that contract expired June 8.

The union has no plans to strike imminently and is preparing for negotiations to resume Monday, Finn said.

Food 4 Less workers are pushing for pay parity with their counterparts at Ralphs. Kroger owns about 300 Ralphs and Food 4 Less stores in the state.

Clerks at Food 4 Less who check groceries and stock shelves make about \$4 less in hourly wages than those

with the same jobs at Ralphs. That’s in part because the company classifies its Ralphs locations as supermarkets while treating Food 4 Less stores as warehouse stores.

But workers and union leaders, who say there is little meaningful difference between the two chains, also allege a racial element to the pay inequalities. Food 4 Less stores tend to be in lower-income Black and brown communities, while Ralphs generally are in whiter and wealthier areas, the union says. When asked about the allegation, Food 4 Less representatives declined to comment.

The company’s latest proposal offers an hourly rate increase of about a \$1 each year over the course of the contract, amounting to a total boost of \$3.25. The union is pushing for about double that increase.

In a statement about the company’s proposal, which was sent to workers June 10, Bryan Kaltenbach, president of Food 4 Less, said, “Hardworking and dedicated associates are the heartbeat of our company, and our goal is to continue to provide market-competitive wages and benefits that we know are so important to our associates and their families.”

On Friday afternoon outside a Food 4 Less in Westlake, workers gathered around a table set up to cast their votes.

Jeanne Coleman, a cashier at the Westlake store, voted to approve a strike. She said that besides pay parity with Ralphs, she’s concerned about understaffing. At night, there might be just two cashiers on duty to field the rush of customers who come in to shop after work. Customers waiting in line will begin making calls asking the store to open up another station, she said.

“It’s ridiculous, the issues we have to deal with, but they don’t want to pay us,” Coleman said.

When the union announced it would hold a strike authorization vote, the company began posting notices to hire temporary workers at rates higher than many workers are currently paid, said Tyrone Severe, a cashier at the Westlake store.

“They are trying to hire nonunion workers and pay them more, instead of just negotiating with us,” Severe said. “We think that sucks.”

Members of the union’s bargaining committee accused the company of bargaining in bad faith. For example, during bargaining sessions scheduled for three consecutive days last week, the company’s negotiators showed up late and would leave the negotiation table for hours at a time, workers said.

Visits by Kaltenbach to various stores in recent weeks struck workers as an intimidation tactic.

Christopher Watkins, 24, a meat cutter at a Food 4 Less store in Inglewood, said he’s previously seen the president visit his store about twice a year, but in recent weeks he’s seen him about four times.

Food 4 Less did not comment in response to specific questions about worker claims of intimidation and treatment at the bargaining table.

Fast-food chains start ‘value’ war

By CINDY CARCAMO

Millions of American families are hitting the road to start summer vacation, and ordering food on the run tends to be par for the course. It couldn’t come at a better time. Fast-food joints are in the midst of a budget-meal war, offering promotions to lure customers back to their restaurants despite inflation woes and a minimum-wage increase in California and other states.

Starting June 25, McDonald’s will offer a monthlong deal featuring a combo meal — either a McChicken, a McDouble or four-piece chicken nuggets, small fries and a small drink — for \$5.

After McDonald’s announcement last month, other fast-food restaurants followed suit. Wendy’s announced its \$3 limited-time breakfast combo meal, and Burger King trumpeted that it planned to bring back its \$5 Your Way Meal.

In addition, fast-food mobile apps continue to offer deeper discounts.

Earlier this week, a Big Mac with medium fries and medium drink cost \$11.79 before tax at a McDonald’s in Santa Ana. That same meal ordered via a mobile app for pickup at the same location cost \$6.50 before tax, a savings of \$5.29.

But the prices and deals tend to vary depending on the user. Diners have taken to complaining on Reddit about the McDonald’s mobile app. Some say the

deals decrease with use. Others say their friends or partners were getting a better deal on the app than they were getting. A few mentioned that they could find better deals by just walking in and ordering at their local McDonald’s.

The plethora of promotional deals come after diners blasted fast-food companies on social media earlier this year for rising prices.

In response, Joe Erlinger, president of McDonald’s USA, said in an open letter last month that the average price of McDonald’s menu items is up an estimated 40% since 2019.

“Recently, we have seen viral social posts and poorly sourced reports that McDonald’s has raised prices significantly beyond inflationary rates. This is inaccurate,” Erlinger wrote.

“The average price of a Big Mac in the U.S. was \$4.39 in 2019,” he said. “Despite a global pandemic and historic rises in supply chain costs, wages and other inflationary pressures in the years that followed, the average cost is now \$5.29. That’s an increase of 21% (not 100%),” as unsubstantiated claims allege on social media.

Quick-service restaurants said the increases were in response to rising inflation and labor costs — partly due to hikes in minimum wage not just in California but throughout the country.

It’s true that quick-service restaurants such as McDonald’s have had to contend with increased costs,

but they are by no means hurting, said Shubhranshu Singh, an associate professor at Johns Hopkins University who specializes in quick-service marketing.

“They are not struggling,” Singh said. “Inflation is going up. Wage rates are going up. But profit for McDonald’s is also going up.”

Global comparable sales for McDonald’s grew nearly 2% in the first quarter of the year, according to the latest statistics made available by the company. The fast-food giant described this profit increase as having “benefitted from average check growth driven by strategic menu price increases.”

Price-weary diners have taken notice and become fed up with the price hikes, choosing to eat less fast food and protesting on social media that their go-to budget meals were no longer wallet-friendly, Singh said.

Several diners took aim at McDonald’s, griping on TikTok about high prices for food that’s supposed to be affordable.

“This is \$3 worth of food,” said a customer who held up a hash brown. “Something doesn’t seem right here.”

One diner called it “absurd” that she’d paid \$4.59 for a medium order of fries.

And then there was the uproar over a McDonald’s location in Connecticut charging \$18 for a Big Mac combo meal. The photo sparked a nationwide debate on soaring fast-food prices.

Most McDonald’s in the U.S. are independently fran-

chised, so prices vary depending on where one visits.

Increased fast-food prices ultimately led to slower-than-expected sales at various quick-service restaurants, such as McDonald’s, Starbucks and Pizza Hut.

“Consumers are always making choices,” said restaurant analyst Sara Senatore at Bank of America. “When the value proposition starts to diminish, consumers will make other choices.”

Up until fairly recently, consumers were willing to pay more for quick-service food. When fast-food prices started to soar in 2022, consumers just went along because prices everywhere had surged due to inflation, Senatore said.

But now inflation has lessened. Grocery prices have fallen, and budget-conscious consumers may no longer see fast food as the clear-cut affordable choice, she said.

Enter the value meals. Budget meals aren’t new. In the 1980s, McDonald’s, Wendy’s and Burger King engaged in a series of advertising campaigns known as the Burger Wars competing for customers in the then-flourishing fast-food market.

“The hope is that the consumer will go there and maybe buy something additional to the value meal and then want to return even when there is no deal,” Singh said.

But the promotions, analysts warned, can’t last forever.



MEL MELCON Los Angeles Times

FOOD 4 Less workers are seeking pay parity with their Ralphs counterparts. Above, a store in 2020.

Closed-door meetings focus on key issues

[Budget, from A1] through the budget process, and billions of dollars are being distributed with a comparatively much, much smaller amount of public involvement, public oversight and public activism.”

The Legislature passed a temporary budget Thursday that reflects agreements between the Senate and the Assembly. As they cast their votes, Democrats repeatedly emphasized how open they’ve been in crafting their budget.

“We’ve had 72 public hearings,” Assembly Budget Chair Jesse Gabriel (D-Encino) said after the vote. “I have sat through hours of public comment, as have all of the sub chairs.”

“I think Californians have a good understanding of what the major issues are that are at stake in this process.”

But the Legislature’s budget is not a done deal. Closed-door meetings continue with the governor as they work to close a \$45-billion deficit and land a final funding plan for the fiscal year that begins July 1. Beyond the budget, elected officials are also negotiating with interest groups over proposed statewide ballot measures that include billions of dollars in bonds to build schools, housing and environmental projects.

Though California is famous for its citizen-led initiatives that allow anyone with enough money or political support to gather signatures to place a proposal before voters, a relatively new law gives politicians more say in what reaches the ballot.

Changes enacted a decade ago give initiative proponents a window of time to pull their measures off the ballot. That’s created a rush of negotiations as Gov. Gavin Newsom and lawmakers try to persuade some interest groups to drop their initiatives in exchange for policy changes from Sacramento.

These are some key issues being deliberated in secret:

Crime measures

Lawmakers have spent months crafting a package of bills to address retail theft and fentanyl addiction. The legislation has gone through multiple public hearings and debate at the Capitol. Meanwhile, district attorneys have been collecting signatures for a ballot measure to roll back parts of Proposition



RICH PEDRONCELLI Associated Press

A SIGN at a June union protest in Sacramento references the \$25 minimum wage for healthcare workers, the details of which are still being negotiated.

position 47, the decade-old law that changed some felony drug and property theft offenses into misdemeanors. Their initiative, which is backed by law enforcement groups and major retailers, just qualified for the ballot last week.

But Newsom and legislative leaders have so far said they don’t want to bring Proposition 47 back to voters. That’s where the backroom dealmaking comes in.

In a closed-door meeting two weeks ago, representatives for Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas (D-Hollister) made a strong-arm move to try to persuade the proponents of the ballot measure to rescind their proposal, telling them lawmakers are adding a provision to the antitheft bills that will revoke the legislation if the ballot measure passes.

Legislative leaders said the move is necessary to avoid technical conflicts between the ballot measure and the bills.

But it had the effect of jump-starting negotiations over what it could take for proponents to pull their measure off the ballot, or to agree to reforms both sides can live with.

Healthcare pay hike

Last year the governor signed a law to raise the minimum wage for healthcare workers to \$25 an hour — a plan lawmakers changed so

significantly at the last minute that no cost estimate was available when they passed the bill. It turned out to be one of the most expensive new state laws in years, with Newsom’s Department of Finance projecting a price tag of \$4 billion.

After signing the bill, Newsom told The Times he privately reached an “understanding” with lawmakers that the state would have the power to tweak the plan in times of financial distress. But when and how to delay the raises? Those details are the subject of secret negotiations that have been going on for months among Newsom’s administration, labor union representatives and other healthcare interests.

The governor said in May that he won’t sign a budget until the issue is resolved. But he wouldn’t say much more than that about how he wants to change the policy that could affect about 400,000 Californians. Democrats who supported the legislation have been just as tight-lipped.

“One of the things I’ve learned the hard way is talking too publicly about a process that’s unfolding in real time,” Newsom said at his budget presentation in May.

Weeks later, he shot down transparency concerns, saying California law requires that bills be made public for

72 hours before legislators can vote on them.

“There’s a lot of public review, a lot of transparency. It’s just a lot of work when you’re governing one of the largest economies in the world, there are a lot of moving parts,” he said. “We actually have some of the most transparent public processes in the country. In many ways, we’re a model.”

Talks with business

Some of the largest companies in the state have banded together to place two measures on the November ballot that unions and Democrats oppose.

One would make it harder for the state to increase taxes, the other would curtail a unique California law that allows workers to sue employers on behalf of other workers.

Rob Lapsley, president of the California Business Roundtable, participated in private meetings last week with Rivas and Senate leader Mike McGuire (D-Healdsburg) to discuss elements of the Taxpayer Protection and Government Accountability Act.

The business group is a proponent of the measure, which Lapsley describes as a necessary check and balance on a supermajority of Democrats running California government. Removing the initiative from the ballot is a top priority for labor

unions, Newsom and Democratic lawmakers.

Lapsley has said he’s been “crystal clear” that he would meet with anyone who wants to discuss the measure. So far, it’s unclear whether the opponents can offer strong enough incentives for him to end his campaign, which Democrats have challenged in the California Supreme Court.

Medi-Cal payments

A fight playing out in the dark over funding for California’s healthcare system for the poor is pitting Newsom against some of his top allies.

Anticipating the state budget crisis to continue in the years ahead, the governor proposed using revenue from a tax on managed care organizations, called the MCO tax, to avoid cuts to Medi-Cal.

A coalition led by the California Medical Assn. and Planned Parenthood called for the governor to stick to an agreement he made in 2023 — and reneged on this year — to use some of the funding to increase payments to providers who accept Medi-Cal patients.

The group is leading a charge to pass a measure on the 2024 ballot that would permanently establish an MCO tax to fund higher reimbursement rates. The coalition argues that increasing rates is critical to improving access to care as the state expands enrollment to immigrants who are in the country illegally.

The governor wants the coalition to delay the measure from taking effect, or take it off the ballot. But the coalition, which has struggled to secure an ongoing funding source for rate increases for over a decade, is afraid Democrats will divert the money again if it stands down.

Gabriel, the Assembly member who leads the budget committee, said Thursday that it’s “been a complicated conversation.”

Bond measures

Last year lawmakers introduced roughly a dozen bond proposals totaling \$100 billion in borrowing. Many of them were debated publicly early in the year, but then shelved.

Now, as lawmakers face the June 27 deadline to place bonds on the November ballot, negotiations have heated up behind closed doors. The debate has centered on how much money to

ask voters to borrow and which of three possible bonds to put on the ballot: school construction, affordable housing, and infrastructure to help manage extreme weather exacerbated by climate change.

Democrats in the Senate and Assembly have been deliberating during private caucus meetings, which are attended only by lawmakers of the same party. Those conversations resulted in Democrats choosing to place bonds on the ballot to fund climate change programs and school facilities instead of housing, sources say. But nothing has been announced publicly.

Insurance crisis

There’s been no shortage of public attention to the problem of insurance companies declining coverage for homes they deem too risky due to wildfires. California lawmakers have held hearings on legislation to stem the problem. The state insurance commissioner has crafted new regulations to stabilize the market. Newsom is backing a bill to speed up the process for reviewing requests by insurers to raise rates.

But McGuire, the state Senate leader who comes from a wine country region where many constituents have had their insurance dropped after a wave of devastating blazes, said the changes proposed so far are not enough. That’s why he brought together several Democratic colleagues to form a working group on insurance.

He said he’s hoping to build consensus on how the state can give homeowners assurance they will be covered if they take steps to make their property fire-resistant.

“I have been kicked in the teeth over and over by industry on this issue,” McGuire said in an interview.

“Shame on me if I don’t use this opportunity to be able to advance legislation that we should have implemented years ago that would help stabilize the market and give homeowners the tools they need to make their neighborhood more fire safe.”

He said he’s trying to develop legislation that could pass by the end of August but realizes it may take until next year. He said any bills that emerge from the private working group will go through the Legislature’s public vetting process.

MARKET ROUNDUP

Tech gains help stocks set more records

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — U.S. stocks rose to records Monday as gains for technology companies keep pushing the market higher.

The Standard & Poor’s 500 climbed 0.8% to top its all-time high set on Thursday. The Dow Jones industrial average gained 188 points, or 0.5%, while the Nasdaq composite added 1% to its own record.

Autodesk jumped 6.5% for one of the market’s biggest gains after an investment firm said it will try to delay the software company’s annual meeting so it can nominate new directors for the board. Starboard Value also outlined how it says Autodesk hasn’t performed as well financially as it should have. In response, Autodesk said it will review Starboard’s suggestions but added that it has “a clear strategy that is working.”

Close behind Autodesk was chip company Broadcom, which rose 5.4% to add to gains from last week after it reported better profit than expected and said it would undergo a 10-for-one stock split to make its price more affordable. Broadcom followed Nvidia, the company that’s become the poster child of Wall Street’s frenzy around artificial intelligence technology and just executed a similar split.

Broadcom was one of the

Major stock indexes

Index	Close	Daily change	Daily % change	YTD % change
Dow industrials	38,778.10	+188.94	+0.49	+2.89
S&P 500	5,473.23	+41.63	+0.77	+14.75
Nasdaq composite	17,857.02	+168.14	+0.95	+18.96
S&P 400	2,921.19	+25.88	+0.89	+5.02
Russell 2000	2,022.01	+15.85	+0.79	-0.25
EuroStoxx 50	4,880.42	-55.08	+0.85	+7.93
Nikkei (Japan)	38,102.44	-712.12	-1.83	+13.86
Hang Seng (Hong Kong)	17,936.12	-5.66	-0.03	+5.21

Associated Press

Strongest forces pushing the S&P 500 upward, along with a 2% rise for Apple and 1.2% climb for Microsoft.

Continued momentum for Big Tech stocks, along with easing pressure on inflation, has investors “cheering the ‘glass half full’ outlook” instead of focusing on the struggles of lower- and middle-income Americans and other challenges, said Anthony Saglimbene, chief market strategist at Ameriprise.

Super Micro Computer, which sells server and storage systems used in artificial intelligence and other computing, leaped 5.1% to bring its gain for the year to 212.2%. It’s also part of the supernova around AI that’s been overshadowing almost everything else on Wall Street.

The gains for tech helped offset pressure on the stock market caused by rising Treasury yields in the bond market. The climb in yields erased some of the slack created last week when better-than-expected reports on inflation raised hopes that the Federal Reserve will cut interest rates this year.

This week has few top-tier economic reports for the United States outside of Tuesday’s update on how much customers are spending at U.S. retailers and Friday’s preliminary look at the state of U.S. business activity. Markets will also be closed Wednesday for the Juneteenth holiday.

A report on Monday said manufacturing in New York

state is still contracting, though not by as much as economists expected. Manufacturing has been one of the areas hit hardest by the Federal Reserve’s zeal to keep its main interest rate at the highest level in more than two decades.

High interest rates hurt all kinds of investments, and they tend to hit some areas particularly hard. Utilities in the S&P 500 fell 1.1% for Monday’s largest loss among the 11 sectors that make up the index. They often get hurt when bonds are paying more in interest and drawing away income-seeking investors who would otherwise gravitate to dividend-paying utility stocks.

All told, the S&P 500 rose 41.63 points to 5,473.23. The Dow gained 188.94 to 38,778.10, and the Nasdaq composite jumped 168.14 to 17,857.02.

In the bond market, the yield on the 10-year Treasury climbed to 4.28% from 4.22% late Friday. The two-year Treasury yield, which more closely tracks expectations for the Fed, rose to 4.76% from 4.71%.

In stock markets abroad, European indexes calmed somewhat after last week’s rout. France’s CAC 40 rose 0.9% following its worst week in two years on worries that potential electoral losses by the president’s centrist party could lead to sharply higher debt for the country.

The modest gains for Europe followed losses in Asia. Japan’s Nikkei 225 dropped 1.8%.

Group files IRS claim against two affiliates of Epoch Times

Watchdog alleges ‘potentially false’ data on tax returns. Move comes after finance chief’s indictment.

By Stacy Perman

The government watchdog organization Accountable.US filed an IRS complaint against the Epoch Public Foundation and the Epoch Times Assn., the nonprofit groups affiliated with the right-wing media outlet the Epoch Times.

The complaint, sent to the Internal Revenue Service last week, requests an investigation into “potentially false or fraudulent information” made on the nonprofit’s tax returns for the fiscal years 2021 and 2022.

This month, Weidong “Bill” Guan, the chief financial officer of the Epoch Times, was arrested and charged in what federal prosecutors called a “sprawling, transnational scheme” to launder at least \$67 million in illicit funds.

Guan used cryptocurrency to purchase tens of millions of dollars in crime proceeds, including prepaid debit cards, fraudulently obtained unemployment insurance benefits and stolen personal information that was used to spike the Epoch Times’ reported annual revenue, according to the indictment, handed down last month.

The scheme began in 2020, when the Epoch Times’ “Make Money Online” team led by Guan purchased “crime proceeds” and transferred them to accounts as-

sociated with the media company, the indictment stated. Federal prosecutors alleged that the funds increased company’s revenue 410% in a single year to \$62 million.

Guan deposited \$16.7 million of the proceeds into his personal accounts, according to the Justice Department, but did not report this income on his tax filings.

A grand jury indicted Guan with one count of money laundering and two counts of bank fraud.

After his arrest, the Epoch Times released a statement on its website saying that it has suspended Guan “until this matter is resolved,” adding that, the “company intends to and will fully cooperate with any investigation dealing with the allegations against Mr. Guan.”

Accountable.US is a progressive nonprofit organization based in Washington, D.C., that monitors the financial transactions of right-wing groups. Its complaint cites “several apparent inconsistencies and reporting errors” in the Epoch Public Foundation and the Epoch Times Assn.’s tax filings.

“The discrepancies and apparent reporting errors in EPTF’s and ETA’s Form 990s for fiscal years 2021 and 2022 are cause for concern as they occurred while Weidong ‘Bill’ Guan ... was allegedly engaged in a money laundering scheme related to his business ventures, according to federal prosecutors,” states the group’s letter to the IRS.

A representative of Epoch Times could not be immediately reached for comment.

The Epoch Times was founded in 2000 by Chinese Americans affiliated with the Falun Gong spiritual movement that is banned in China. Based in New York, the newspaper began as a small, free giveaway focused on criticizing the Chinese Communist Party.

The news outlet has since become a forceful presence among conservative news organizations, known for spreading conspiracy theories, particularly on social media, and as a staunch supporter of former President Trump and his allies.

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L.A. can't weaken its ambitious housing plan

Leaders are squandering the potential to transform the city by protecting single-family zoning.

IN 2021, LOS ANGELES adopted one of California's most ambitious housing plans. City leaders committed to passing pro-development policies and re-zoning enough land to accommodate 455,000 new units of housing, with nearly 185,000 for low-income residents.

The plan could be transformational, and not just because the city is making room for five times more homes than in previous plans. This one aims to comply with fair-housing law by putting affordable housing in high-opportunity communities, such as Encino, parts of Hollywood and the West-side, which have lots of jobs, good schools, transit stops, parks and other amenities.

That would be a shift from historic pat-terns of segregation that concentrated af-fordable housing in lower-income, lower-re-sourced communities, such as South L.A. and the northeast San Fernando Valley.

Now, however, the city is backing off its earlier ambition — by taking single-family zones off the table for new apartments and townhomes.

That decision will diminish the effectiveness of key programs to put more affordable housing near transit, high-op-portunity communities and so-called Op-portunity Corridors, which include major streets in affluent neighborhoods, such as Westwood, Sherman Oaks and the Mid-Wilshire area. It also limits the availability of land for low-rise apartments, townhomes

and bungalow courts that could soften the visual transition between single-family homes and 4- or 5-story apartment build-ings on busy corridors, while filling a need in the middle-income housing market. These programs are the backbone of L.A.'s housing plan.

But housing advocates now wonder how L.A. can possibly meet state requirements to plan for half a million new homes while reducing segregation. More than 76% of the land in affluent neighborhoods is zoned for single-family homes. Excluding those prop-erties does not leave enough land available to build the number of affordable and mixed-income housing the city needs.

Instead, developers will concentrate building on land already zoned for multi-family units — and will probably displace current tenants by demolishing small, often rent-controlled apartments to build bigger complexes. Yes, Los Angeles needs a lot more housing, but the current strategy fuels displacement and gentrification while leav-ing three-fourths of affluent residential areas untouched.

The decision to exempt single-family zones perpetuates unfair land-use patterns, a coalition of housing groups wrote last month in a letter to city leaders, and means “most of the city's wealthiest and most priv-ileged areas will remain off-limits to mixed-income multi-family housing development.”

The Planning Department acknowl-edged during a public hearing this spring that the changes will reduce the number of sites that can be developed and make it harder to achieve equity goals in the hous-ing plan. But, officials said, they were flooded by opposition from homeowners' groups and others, and directed by the City



JEFF DURKIN Brooks + Scarpa

THE ROSE Apartments, designed by Brooks + Scarpa, bring density, passive ventilation, outdoor space and affordable housing to a small lot in Venice.

Council to remove single-family zoning from the programs.

That's a shame. Mayor Karen Bass and the City Council cannot just listen to the loudest voices resistant to change. Surveys have repeatedly shown that most Angelenos think housing and homelessness are the most pressing problems in the city and they support building to ease the lack of afford-able housing — including in single-family neighborhoods close to transit, jobs, parks and other amenities.

State law requires that the housing plan take effect on Feb. 15, 2025, which means the policies and programs have to be adopted by the City Council and approved by Bass in the fall. The Planning Department deserves credit for including many smart, strong pro-grams within the housing plan, and for working on a fast timeline.

For example, the plan will help fast-track

affordable and mixed-income apartment construction on major streets near transit and in more affluent neighborhoods that have historically tried to block multifamily housing. It includes stronger renter protec-tions and requirements that when rent-sta-bilized units are demolished, they are re-placed in the new buildings. The plan also makes it much easier for religious institu-tions to build affordable housing on their properties, even in single-family zones.

But by excluding single-family zones from other programs, L.A. is hobbling its ambitions and squandering the potential to transform the city. The mayor and City Council should direct the Planning Depart-ment to put single-family zones back on the table.

L.A. will not become an affordable, liv-able city for the next generation by protect-ing the status quo.

LETTERS



RICK BOWMER Associated Press

A BUMP STOCK, which enables a more rapid rate of fire, is attached to a rifle at a gun store in Utah.

The last thing we need: more firepower

Re “The Supreme Court rejected all common sense on bump stocks,” Opinion, June 15

LAST WEEKEND, I called Central Texas Gun Works in Austin, Texas, and spoke with an employee. He informed me that as of June 15, it is again legal to purchase a bump stock.

The owner of that business sued to make these “accessories” legal again, saying the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) went too far in banning the sale of bump stocks. And the Supreme Court agreed, striking down the federal regulation in a 6-3 ruling.

Although I was told by the employee that the store did not have any of these semiautomatic rifle enhancements in stock, I could buy one online for \$350.

Yes! For just \$350, anyone can purchase an add-on that offers the capability to shoot 400-800 rounds per minute. That's just what our nation needs: an easier way to massacre.

In a concurring opinion for the Supreme Court, Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. wrote that it is up to Congress to ban bump stocks, not the ATF. So, in this country, where the No. 1 killer of children is gun violence, kids will just need to wait for Congress to act. What could go wrong?

ELIZABETH OSBORNE
Santa Barbara

Op-ed articles and editorials often deride or praise the Supreme Court based on the policy implications of their decisions. But the court's mandate is not to do “what's best” in terms of policy (or even enforce-ment). That's the mandate of Congress.

The court's job is to determine whether a law or an executive action is consistent with the various provisions of the U.S. Con-stitution.

In this case, the court decided that, if the objective is to ban bump stocks, then Congress must amend the

law to specify such a prohib-ition. And that decision is correct.

If there is to be public pressure put on a branch of the government, it should be on Congress to enact better policies, not the court to decide what's best.

PETER MARSTON
Glendale

::

I recently returned from a two-week trip to multiple countries in Europe, and the topic of conversation with many people I met there was why there are so many

gun deaths in the United States.

There is only one answer: The American judicial system has refused to recog-nize that the needs ad-dressed by the 2nd Amend-ment, added to the Consti-tution in 1791, bear no resem-blance to the country's needs today.

We have no fear of slave uprisings or invasions by foreign armies, and we have a standing military. Today, the only thing we have to fear is getting shot by some-one else.

CHUCK HEINZ
West Hills

A baseball team has six of its nine players get hits in a game. With only that information, we have no way of knowing who got the hits and who did not.

The Supreme Court issues a 6-3 decision in a case — it can be any case, not just the one about bump stocks. We immediately know who made up the six and who were in the three without knowing anything about the case itself.

So don't tell me the jus-tices are not politically motivated.

LARRY MACEDO
West Hills

Pool heaters and gas cars

Re “Your dip in the pool will soon be electric,” June 14

Should we all stand up and applaud the South Coast Air Quality Manage-ment District (AQMD) for its decision to eliminate gas-fueled pool heaters? This is just another easy-to-pass regulation that will end up costing consumers mon-ey.

My gripe with the AQMD? It won't touch cars. You can own as many cars as you want. You can drive as many miles as you want. You can buy and consume as much gas as you want. Air pollution will continue to be a problem as long as the roads are clogged with cars and trucks.

Let's face it: Regulating pool heaters is just a drop in the bucket. Drive out onto the 405 Freeway in the morning or afternoon and you'll see why we have so much air pollution.

PETER MARQUARD
Northridge

::

I have a gas pool heater and never use it because doing so is too expensive. I use a solar cover if I want to heat the pool.

Another issue with get-ting rid of gas appliances is not simply buying an elec-tric appliance. If you have an older home that was not wired to handle new electric appliances, you have to hire an electrician to upgrade your panel and rewire your home to power the new equipment.

This is a considerable cost of going electric. The government needs to take that into account with new regulations.

I am not saying the change shouldn't be made. But to accomplish the goal of reducing climate emis-sions and air pollution, the government should offer more tax breaks and a list of electricians who will do the necessary work at reason-able rates.

LINDA SHABSIN
Diamond Bar

::

Once again, a govern-ment agency has gotten it wrong.

The latest environmen-

tal protection scheme is to ban gas pool heaters. Really?

A seldom used gas pool heater is nothing in terms of damaging our environment compared with the count-less gasoline leaf blowers used every waking hour in California.

I hear and smell unregu-lated gasoline leaf blowers from sunrise to sunset. Ever hear of a smog check for a leaf blower?

In contrast, I have yet to hear or smell the pollution from a gas pool heater — not even once.

RODNEY KEMERER
Beverly Hills

My friend, L.A.'s oldest man

Re “110 years of 'innate curi-osity,' ” column, June 12

Having had the pleasure of knowing Morrie Markoff and many of his family members for much of my life, I feel Steve Lopez's column about him couldn't have been a more perfect tribute.

Lopez captured Morrie's humanity, creativity and curiosity, as well as the loving bond formed with his caregiver Charito.

I had so much fun cre-ating song parodies for his 100th birthday party and then his 110th — “That's Our Morrie” was sung to “That's Amore.” Hearing Morrie laugh was such a joy.

The family donating his brain for research allows Morrie to continue contrib-uting to the world in which he so actively participated.

At age 108, Morrie was interviewed on Spectrum News. The reporter shared that for exercise during the COVID-19 pandemic, Morrie would walk around his kitchen table at home, and if he felt up for doing more, he'd attach a leaf to the table.

Morrie added a leaf and more to everything he did and to the lives of everyone lucky enough to know him. I'll leaf it at that.

JEANNINE FRANK
Los Angeles

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OP-ED

One pillar of U.S. racism also props up Fox News

LZ GRANDERSON

I SWEAR, EVERY time I hear Newt Gingrich spout off, I think of the brilliant 2020 book by Isabel Wilkerson, about the eight core beliefs that uphold a caste system. The pillar of “inherent superiority vs. inherent inferiority” is the one that keeps Gingrich on TV.

Conservatives have known he was full of it since his first campaign in 1974. Back then Gingrich touted a campaign slogan — “Newt’s family is like your family” — though it was common knowledge he was cheating on his wife.

“Jackie was kind of frumpy,” Gingrich’s first press secretary told Mother Jones. Gingrich reportedly told his campaign treasurer that his wife was not “pretty enough to be the wife of the president. And besides, she has cancer.”

So when Sean Hannity of Fox News wanted someone to criticize the credibility of Vice President Kamala Harris, the natural choice was of course ... Newt Gingrich. A man who faced ethics investigations and was forced out as House speaker. A man who avoided paying more alimony and child support when he had a \$4-million book advance coming his way. Yes, Fox News ... America is just dying to hear what Gingrich has to say about credibility.

“Kamala’s hopeless because she’s Kamala,” he quipped this



month. “Anybody who watches her knows the idea of her being president makes Biden look good, which is really hard nowa-days. You have to start with the idea that she has imprinted on the country, permanently, that she’s a very shallow, uneducated and uneducable person. Other than her weird laugh there’s no significant part of her.”

Harris graduated from Howard University and has a law degree. Her mother left India to come to the United States in 1958 to study biochemistry. Her father is an economist who taught at

every inhabitant, its codes absorbed like mineral springs, setting the expectations of where one fits on the ladder. The mill worker with nobody else to ‘look down on’ regards himself as eminently superior to the Negro. The colored man represents his last outpost against social oblivion.”

For 50 years, Gingrich’s political positions have gravitated to whatever the polls said they should be. What has been consistent is his willingness to demean. That sharp tongue was something that became a hallmark

Ava DuVernay’s film ‘Origin,’ now on Hulu, illuminates what is happening when someone like Newt Gingrich defies objective reality to make wild claims such as calling Kamala Harris ‘uneducated and uneducable.’

Stanford. They both earned doctorates in their respective fields from Berkeley.

Gingrich called the vice president both “uneducated” and “uneducable” not for the sake of truth and honesty but to protect the pillar of caste that would be threatened by the truth about Harris. The one identified in Wilkerson’s book, “Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents,” as “inherent superiority vs. inherent inferiority.”

Citing 1942 observations from the Yale scholar Liston Pope, she wrote in the book: “A caste system has a way of filtering down to

early on in his political career and was on full show when it came time to talk about welfare reform during the 1990s. His policy debates were opportunities to use dehumanizing rhetoric to refer to anyone he deemed “less than.” And by proxy, Gingrich supporters were also able to look down on those who needed assistance.

Even after leaving Congress in scandal, and even after his well-documented mistreatment of women, Gingrich somehow still communicates to his audience: “We are inherently better.” And that’s why he felt comfort-

able saying the nonsensical things about Harris that he did. He knows he’s lying, but his lies bring comfort to those who cling to that pillar of the caste system.

Ava DuVernay adapted “Caste” for the big screen in 2023 with the movie “Origin,” which recently started streaming and landed in the Top 3 on Hulu. It does a beautiful job of transforming Wilkerson’s reporting into a compelling narrative about our shared humanity — the joys and the pain. And it does so in desperate pursuit of understanding and healing as opposed to showcasing trauma with a punitive tone.

During last season’s cinematic commercial hurricane that was Barbenheimer, “Origin” did not get the attention it deserves. In its second life, I’m glad it is finding more viewers.

Voters who see this film very well might think about the upcoming election in a different way — seeing the various ways caste continues to manifest in America and the eight pillars on which it stands.

Gingrich is a smart man. He has a doctorate in European history. He chose his line of attack against Harris strategically, not to critique policies of the Biden administration but to prey on the discomfort a lot of people have about the idea of a Black woman being president. And to prop up that “inherent inferiority” pillar of America’s caste system.

While neither major party would pass a purity test, there is only one party that keeps putting a microphone in front of people like Gingrich ... and it’s not because the audience wants to hear the truth.

@LZGranderson

AI is built on artists’ work. Will they ever get paid?

Many copyright infringement lawsuits have been filed against artificial intelligence companies.

By Mary Rasenberger

AMID THE HYPE surrounding Apple’s new deal with OpenAI, one issue has been largely papered over: The AI company’s foundational models are, and have always been, built atop the theft of creative professionals’ work.

The arrangement with Apple isn’t the only news from OpenAI. Among recent updates and controversies including high-level defections, last month the company quietly announced Media Manager, scheduled for release in 2025. A tool purportedly designed to allow creators and content owners to control how their work is used, Media Manager is really a shameless attempt to evade responsibility for the theft of artists’ intellectual property that OpenAI is already profiting from.

OpenAI says this tool would allow creators to identify their work and choose whether to exclude it from AI training processes. But this does nothing to address the fact that the company built its foundational models using authors’ and other creators’ works without consent, compensation or control over how OpenAI users will be able to imitate the artists’ styles to create new works. As it’s described, Media Manager puts the burden on creators to protect their work and fails to address the company’s past legal and ethical transgressions. This overture is like having your valuables stolen from your home and then hearing the thief say, “Don’t worry, I’ll give you a chance to opt out of future burglaries ... next year.”

Writers, artists, journalists and other creative workers have consistently asked that OpenAI and other generative AI companies obtain creators’ consent before using their work to train artificial intelligence products, and that the organizations refrain from using works without express permission. Last July, more than 16,000 authors signed a letter to leading AI companies demanding that the businesses obtain permission and pay for works they use to train their AI. Yet OpenAI continues to trample on artists’ rights and rebuff their appeals, as we saw recently when it launched a ChatGPT audio assistant with a voice similar to Scarlett Johansson’s despite the actor’s clear and repeated refusals.

Although Johansson won her battle — OpenAI “paused” the offending voice from its offerings after the actor threatened legal action — the best chance for the wider community of artists is to band together. AI companies’ cavalier attitude toward creators’ rights and consent extends to people at all levels of fame.

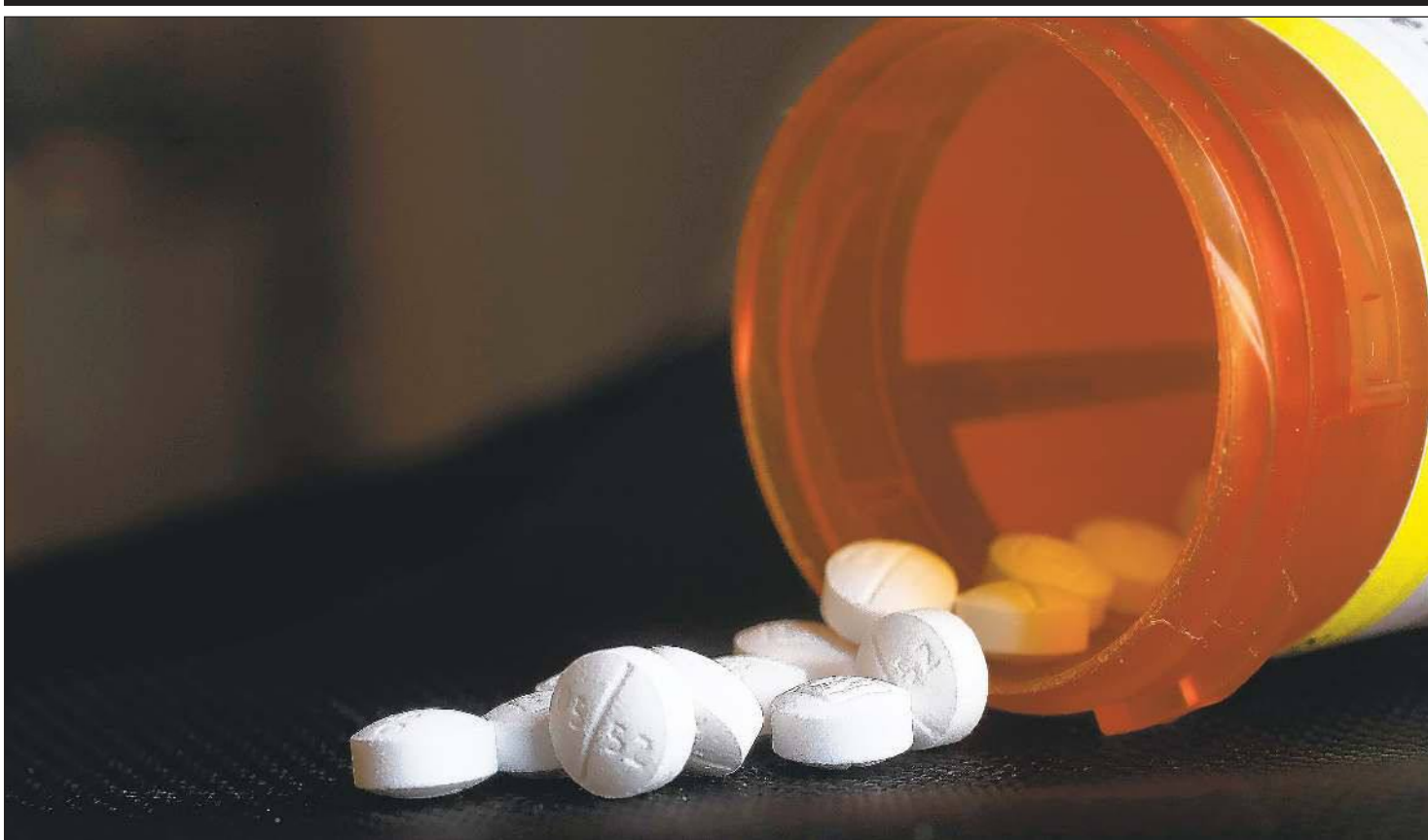
Last year the Authors Guild, along with 17 other plaintiffs, sued OpenAI and Microsoft, demanding that authors receive what they are due. That suit is ongoing and other creative professionals and copyright owners have also taken legal action. Among these are a class action filed by visual artists against Stability AI, Runway AI, Midjourney and Deviant Art, a lawsuit by music publishers against Anthropic for infringement of song lyrics, and suits in the U.S. and U.K. brought by Getty Images against Stability AI for copyright infringement of photographs.

AI companies often argue that it would be impossible for them to license all the content that they need and that doing so would bring progress to a grinding halt. This is simply untrue. OpenAI has signed a succession of licensing agreements with publishers large and small. While the exact terms of these agreements are rarely released to the public, the compensation estimates pale in comparison with the vast outlays for computing power and energy that the company readily spends. Payments to authors would have minimal effects on AI companies’ war chests, but receiving royalties for AI training use would be a meaningful new revenue stream for a profession that’s already suffering.

Authors’ earnings have been in precipitous decline for more than a decade. In 2022, the median annual writing-related income for full-time writers was just over \$20,000, down nearly 50% from 2009. And the data for 2023 look even more dire. AI-generated books, sometimes listed as written by real authors without the writer’s permission, flood Amazon, where anyone searching might buy them instead of the creative work the human author spent months or years writing. Meanwhile, OpenAI is valued at \$80 billion, Anthropic at \$18.4 billion and French AI startup Mistral at \$6.2 billion. These companies claim they need our work to succeed but can’t afford to pay for it. Any human author can tell you that this narrative has blatant inconsistencies.

We cannot trust tech companies that swear their innovations are so important that they do not need to pay for one of the main ingredients — other people’s creative works. The “better future” we are being sold by OpenAI and others is, in fact, a dystopia. It’s time for creative professionals to stand together, demand what we are owed and determine our own futures.

MARY RASENBERGER is the CEO of the Authors Guild.



MARK LENNIHAN Associated Press

A stubborn cause of overdoses may actually be simple to fix

Surgeons prescribe too many opioids, which fuels misuse. Behavioral science points the way toward changing that.

By Zachary Wagner and Craig R. Fox

AMERICA’S OPIOID epidemic is as bad as it has ever been. Although the sharp increase in opioid overdose deaths over the last decade is largely attributed to the rise in fentanyl distributed through drug cartels, a startling number can be traced to prescriptions. In fact, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 45 people died each day in 2021 from a prescription opioid overdose — about one-fifth of all opioid-related deaths.

Some efforts to curb opioid prescribing have shown promise, including prescription drug monitoring programs, promotion of alternative analgesics, provider education and informing prescribing physicians when their patients die from opioid overdoses. But there is one medical specialty for which opioids are still a crucial part of most patients’ treatment plan: surgery. Nearly every patient discharged after surgery leaves the hospital in significant pain, which is why surgeons prescribe more opioids than almost any other specialty.

Most patients, however, do not use all the opioids they are prescribed after an operation. That leaves excess pills in circulation and helps fuel the epidemic. If we could get surgeons to prescribe only the number of pills pa-

tients need for their own use, this could greatly reduce the number of excess pills available for diversion and misuse, among patients, their families and members of their communities. This, in turn, could reduce addiction and overdoses.

Minimizing how often a surgery patient ends up with extra opioids would not solve the crisis, but it’s part of the solution — and it’s achievable.

Changing prescribers’ behavior is hard. They get set in their ways, moored by a strong belief that what they are doing is best for their patients. Moreover, they strenuously resist attempts to constrain their freedom to decide what is best.

Our research team looked to behavioral science for ways to nudge providers to prescribe in accordance with best practices, while leaving them with full autonomy to choose what they think would be best.

Conventional strategies for curbing excessive opioid prescribing assume that surgeons are rational actors who, whenever they are informed about patient needs and incentivized to attend to them, will act to maximize the welfare of patients. If that were the case, simply educating doctors about the dangers of overprescribing might be sufficient.

However, numerous studies from experimental psychology and behavioral economics have shown that people are highly selective in the information they focus on and more socially minded than traditional models of rational self-interest would predict.

Such insights from behavioral science provide promising avenues for curtailing excessive opioid prescribing by surgeons.

For instance, one group of researchers found that setting the default opioid quantity in the electronic health record system to match the amount patients actually use substantially reduces the amount of opioids prescribed. Apparently, busy surgeons tended to go with the flow when prescribing — presumably because the default number of pills became a salient reference point, was easiest to enter and suggested a norm of correct behavior.

Surgeons, like other humans, are social animals who are strongly motivated to adhere to the norms of good behavior endorsed by their peers. We capitalized on this for our recent study, a randomized trial to test two simple interventions across 19 hospitals in Northern California for a year.

In one version, the emails informed surgeons that they had prescribed more pills than other

surgeons in their health system had been prescribing for the same procedure. This message highlighted “descriptive” norms of actual behavior.

In a second, simpler version, whenever a surgeon prescribed opioid amounts that exceeded recommended quantities for the procedure they had performed, we sent the doctor an email notification informing them. This intervention highlighted “injunctive” norms of ideal behavior.

Surprisingly, both social norm interventions had the exact same impact on prescribing. Subsequent patients were about 25% less likely to receive an opioid prescription that exceeded the recommended amount. This resulted in about 42,000 fewer pills in the community for the 26,000 patients who were part of the intervention group.

Imagine how many fewer pills would be prescribed if this were scaled up nationwide, given that there are more than 50 million inpatient surgical procedures performed each year in the U.S. Surely this would lead to millions, if not tens of millions, fewer opioid pills circulating in the U.S. each year.

Inexpensive solutions grounded in evidence on human behavior can be powerful tools in our campaign against opioid addiction. Sometimes just a light touch — a tweak to the default settings in the electronic health records system or an automated email to surgeons — can have an outsized effect on prescribing decisions with life-or-death consequences.

ZACHARY WAGNER is a health economist at USC and Rand. CRAIG R. FOX is a professor of psychology and medicine at UCLA and chair of the Behavioral Decision Making Area at the UCLA Anderson School of Management.

‘We need to take care of them and help them rather than discard them and ignore them, because that’s why all this crime is happening — we’re ignoring the extreme mental health crisis going on in our streets.’

— MARY KLEIN, assault victim



A RUNNER crosses a canal last month in Venice, where two violent sexual attacks in April have shaken residents. Even though violent crime in the neighborhood is down, the fact that police say the suspect is a transient man has heightened years of debate about the neighborhood’s problems with its unhoused population.

Venice sex attacks alarm community

[Venice, from A1]

Klein, who was unconscious, for about seven minutes. After the assault, he stands, pulls his pants up, kicks Klein and walks away.

The Times does not normally identify victims of sexual assault, but Klein, 55, agreed to share her story.

Prosecutors say Jones is the man in the video — and that the violence was far from over.

A few minutes later, the same assailant, according to authorities, is seen returning to the area where Klein was still on the ground.

He briefly stands over her body before again leaving.

For the next 20 minutes, Klein repeatedly tries to sit up. “Never is she fully able to get onto her feet,” Deputy Dist. Atty. Matthew Bunnett wrote in the court filing.

Klein’s attacker returned a second time and is seen in the video kicking her in the head “with full force” as she was sitting up. As she lay on the ground, he stood on top of her head with both feet before finally leaving the scene.

Prosecutors say Klein tried for nearly an hour “getting up and then sitting back down before she walks away.”

Three of Klein’s front teeth were knocked out in the attack. She now has plates and screws in her face. She’s on blood thinners because her brain is still bleeding. She’s suffered seizures and numbness in her hands.

The day after the attack, residents found a pool of blood, earbuds, ChapStick, eyeglasses and the neck of a bottle of Maker’s Mark whiskey outside their home, prosecutors said. Because no crime had been reported there, Los Angeles police told them to throw the items away.

But the Los Angeles Police Department had received reports of an attack nearby.

An hour after Klein’s assault was captured on video, police were called to the 200 block of Sherman Canal by someone who had found a “bloody and unresponsive woman.”

LAPD officers found Sarah Alden on the ground in front of a residential gate. She was lying face down, breathing heavily but unresponsive, and her head was bloodied. Her shirt was wrenched up, and her pants were around her ankles. There was a large pool of blood about 120 feet away.

“The trail appears consistent with [Alden] being dragged,” Bunnett wrote in court papers.

Police found Alden’s cellphone near the blood pool. Her purse was found in the canal.

The assault left Alden, 53, in a coma for more than a month. She was declared brain dead and died May 24 after being disconnected from life support.

..

The search for a suspect in Alden’s attack connected it to Klein’s within two days.

Police and business owners sifted through dozens of hours of surveillance video, hoping to track



A HOMELESS man sleeps near a parking lot this month where the Venice Dell Project will be built to house homeless people.



AANTI SUMAIYYA was chronically homeless for 25 years and lived on the boardwalk before she found the Rose Apartments.

the distinctly dressed man seen attacking Klein. Darrell Preston watched hours of video from one of his restaurants, Baja Cantina, located near the canals. Eventually he spotted the same man, who had approached numerous women in the area that day.

When Preston realized the man had shown an ID at another of his restaurants, he knew he had something helpful for police — a name.

Five days after the attacks, on April 11, Jones was apprehended. He has been charged with two counts of forcible rape, murder, attempted murder, mayhem, torture and sodomy by use of force. He pleaded not guilty to the charges.

Jones has a criminal record — a DUI and open container conviction from Oklahoma City in 2016 as well as a conviction for possession of a false ID card and an undated arrest in Las Vegas for trespassing, according to court documents seeking his detention without bail. He does not have a documented violent past, and authorities are still trying to understand the seeming randomness of the attacks he is accused of committing.

“It’s surprising for someone to commit crimes of that ferocity who does not have a violent background,” said a high-ranking

LAPD official who was not authorized to speak publicly about the case. “There’s usually a crescendo to these things.”

Jones’ attorney, Donna Tryfman, declined to comment on the case.

..

For Klein, the attack remains vague. She doesn’t remember being struck, just waking up afterward. She reported the attack two days later, according to prosecutors.

Doctors told her she suffered a traumatic brain injury.

As time has passed and Klein’s physical injuries have begun to heal, she’s become frustrated. She feels the attacks are emblematic of an issue no one wants to address: the mental health and drug crisis among the unhoused residents of Venice.

“It’s not like they’re horrible people,” Klein said. “It’s just we need to stop being in denial about our family members and our community members who are in desperate need of mental health help — especially those who are really struggling on the streets.”

It’s unclear if Jones lived in a Venice encampment or has mental

health problems. Authorities do not know what brought him to the canals that night.

Although Venice has long been a destination for wanderers, the tenor has changed dramatically in the last few decades, according to many residents, some of whom previously lived on the streets.

In 2021, LAPD and outreach workers cleared 200 people from an encampment on the boardwalk. Those displaced were offered permanent apartments, spots in hotels used as shelters or shelter addresses.

Brian Averill, president of the Venice Neighborhood Council, advocated for the dismantling of the boardwalk encampment, which had disturbed vendors and tourists. Three years later, the homeless population remains a problem, he said.

In 2022, the city counted slightly less than 1,000 sheltered and unsheltered homeless people in Venice, a 50% decrease from 2020. (That report, from the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, was criticized after it failed to count any homeless people in the northwest census tract of Venice known as ground zero of homelessness.)

Much of the angst in the neighborhood revolves around homeless housing.

One flash point is A Bridge Home, a temporary city-run shelter where Venice residents say crime runs rampant. After it opened in February 2020, violent crime rose 88% in nine months.

When the shelter was proposed in 2018 — part of an initiative by then-L.A. Mayor Eric Garcetti — Venice residents erupted in anger, arguing that it would encourage other homeless people to gravitate to the area.

The shelter, at Main Street and Sunset Avenue, houses more than 100 residents but is set to close around the end of the year. The city said it is working to identify alternative housing, either temporary or permanent, for those living there.

Equally controversial is the construction of the Venice Dell Project, a planned 140-unit apartment complex on a city-owned lot along Venice Boulevard between Dell and Pacific avenues that would provide affordable housing as well as supportive housing — with resources such as education and employment services — for people who have experienced homelessness. Many residents, including Averill, oppose the project.

“I think it’s fear of the unknown,” said Becky Dennison, co-executive director of Venice Community Housing, the developer behind the project. “Will we maintain the buildings? What will happen if there’s problems? In this case, there’s been some fear spreading around people with mental illness.”

Although a high-ranking LAPD official said crime is down in Venice, that is not necessarily the perception.

“There’s often a schism between what the numbers show and how people feel,” the official said.

Dennison too said those fears are largely unfounded, noting that the Venice Dell building will be staffed 24/7 with four property managers and case managers for tenants.

Still, construction has been tied up in litigation and City Council approval for more than seven years.

Dennison points to the Rose Apartments, a smaller development with 30 or so units on Rose Avenue.

Rose resident Aanti Sumaiyya, who is almost 70, has lived in Venice on and off for decades. She said she ran a sober social club and converted to Islam before falling on hard times, including drug addiction.

She was chronically homeless for 25 years and was living on the boardwalk when two police officers helped her get off the street and into A Bridge Home in 2020.

“It literally saved my life,” said Sumaiyya, who moved to Rose Apartments in 2022 when it opened.

Mason Lum, 25, also spent time at A Bridge Home but had a different experience.

Lum moved to L.A. from Virginia with his brother seven years ago and quickly became homeless.

Venice residents routinely called police on Lum to keep him from sleeping outside their homes, he said.

At A Bridge Home, Lum said, one man walked around naked all the time. Others constantly challenged Lum to fights. Eventually, his case manager helped him get on the wait list for Rose Apartments, where he moved in 2022.

Dennison said she had hoped the closure of the shelter would coincide with the opening of the Venice Dell Project. But it’s far from complete. So at least some residents from A Bridge Home probably will go back onto the streets of Venice when it closes, further contributing to residents’ fears.

Lum said he fears that the Venice attacks will only worsen local perceptions about homeless people.

“All you see is people talking about this is why we need to end homelessness,” he said. “I think that’s just their perception of homelessness that needs to change.”

Klein said she wants to see the homeless population helped — even after her attack.

“We need to take care of them and help them rather than discard them and ignore them, because that’s why all this crime is happening — we’re ignoring the extreme mental health crisis going on in our streets,” she said.

Until the issue is dealt with, Klein told The Times, she plans to carry pepper spray and is considering getting a dog for more protection. But she says she is not going to let what happened to her alter her life. She still walks the canals.

“At any time things can happen to anyone,” she said. “If you live your life in fear, you’re not living a life.”

CALIFORNIA

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THE S.S. POINT REYES, rotting on the banks of Tomales Bay, has been loved and abused, an attraction for photographers and vandals. Photographs by GENARO MOLINA Los Angeles Times

Beloved ‘shipwreck’ has to go

Officials who are monitoring the deteriorating S.S. Point Reyes say its days are numbered

BY HAILEY BRANSON-POTTS

INVERNESS, Calif. — It once was beautiful, the S.S. Point Reyes, even as it slowly rotted on the banks of Tomales Bay.

But now, its hull is shattered; its innards, rusty and charred. Moss clings to its damp wooden planks, and graffiti mars its chipped paint. It lists precariously toward its starboard side.

The abandoned fishing boat — stuck on a mud-flat in the tiny town of Inverness since the late 1990s, residents say — found its fame long after its working days were done.

Its resting place was pinpointed on Google Maps as “Point Reyes Shipwrecks,” proving irresistible for travelers on nearby Highway 1. It was geotagged on Instagram, where it became the muse of multitudes of cellphone photographers.

The S.S. Point Reyes, as it is known, has been the backdrop for engagement photos and music videos, for quiet lunch breaks and illicit nighttime beers. People climbed it, trashed it and, at one point, accidentally set it on fire.

It has been beloved and abused. And its days appear to be numbered.

The wind and rain from this winter’s record-setting storms sounded the death knell for the boat, which rests at the edge of Tomales Bay, a narrow inlet above the San Andreas fault that [See Boat, B2]



NO DATE has been set, but the boat, which was abandoned on National Park Service land, has been targeted for removal due to its state of decay and potential hazards for visitors.

Citizens less likely to vote cite a dislike of Biden, Trump

Rematch may keep some Californians from the polls, UC Berkeley survey finds.

BY LAURA J. NELSON

Most Californians say they’re likely to vote in the November election, but among those who aren’t sure, there’s a common reason: They don’t like the presidential candidates.

That finding comes from

a poll released Friday by the UC Berkeley Institute of Governmental Studies, which asked 5,095 registered voters across California to reflect on their likelihood of voting in the Nov. 5 general election, which will feature a rematch between President Biden and former President Trump.

The poll, conducted for the nonprofit Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, found that about 78% of California’s registered voters say they’re highly likely to vote. The poll also found that the

intent to vote varies widely by age, race and political affiliation — as do the reasons why people say they aren’t likely to cast a ballot.

Californians who see themselves as highly likely to vote said participating in the presidential election is the leading reason. But among those who say they’re less likely to vote, 40% cited not liking the candidates for president as a reason. That rose to 55% among voters who have voted regularly in the past but aren’t sure whether

they’ll vote this year.

Trump, a Republican, is now running as the first former president convicted of crimes after a jury last month found him guilty of falsifying records in a scheme to conceal payments to a porn actor who alleged they’d had an affair. Biden, a Democrat, is facing criticism from some in his own party over his support for Israel in its war against Hamas, as well as his moves to restrict asylum at the Mexico border. And both are facing questions about their

age: Trump is 78 and Biden is 81.

“The presidential election seems to be cutting both ways,” said Mark DiCamillo, the director of the Berkeley IGS poll. “It’s a motivating factor for those who are already on board and likely to vote, but it seems to be inhibiting others.”

Democrats and liberals were more likely than Republicans and conservatives to say that their dislike of the presidential candidates is one reason they may not [See Voters, B2]

Claim filed against official

Prosecutor says city attorney retaliated against her after she reported problems.

BY DAVID ZAHNISER

A veteran city prosecutor filed a legal claim on Thursday accusing her boss, Los Angeles City Atty. Hydee Feldstein Soto, of retaliating against her for reporting “legal and ethical violations.”

Michelle McGinnis, who until April was head of the city attorney’s criminal branch, alleged in the claim that Feldstein Soto based some decisions about who should be prosecuted on “personal relationships” or “perceived political gain.”

At one point, Feldstein Soto told McGinnis that she wanted the office to stop prosecuting corporate defendants, according to the claim. At another, Feldstein Soto singled out a protester for prosecution without following proper law enforcement procedures, the claim stated.

“When McGinnis objected that the office was both legally and ethically prohibited from making such prosecution decisions, she was subjected to a series of adverse employment actions and ultimately placed on administrative leave, removed from the office, and prohibited from further contact with office colleagues and employees,” attorney Matthew McNicholas, whose firm is representing McGinnis, wrote in the claim.

McNicholas said in a statement that McGinnis was also subjected to a “barrage of retaliatory actions” after she reported various other issues within the of- [See Attorney, B5]

Suit over officer photos is settled

In tentative deal, L.A. will pay attorney fees of journalist and group that published images.

BY LIBOR JANY

The city of Los Angeles has agreed to pay the legal bills for a local journalist and a group of activists whom it took to court last year for publishing photographs of LAPD officers, part of a tentative settlement that will end a lawsuit some saw as an assault on media freedom.

Under the agreement, which still needs to be approved by the City Council, Knock LA journalist Ben Camacho and the group Stop LAPD Spying Coalition will receive \$300,000 for lawyer fees. They were sued for publishing thousands of officers’ pictures that the city had itself provided in response to a public records request.

The agreement allows both sides to put the matter behind them without conceding any wrongdoing, although several other legal actions related to the officer photos remain pending, with the city still attempting to hold Camacho and Stop [See LAPD, B5]

Environmental rights amendment is shelved

Constitutional effort to ensure clean air and water for all is paused as deadline looms.

BY HAYLEY SMITH

A contentious proposal to amend California’s Constitution to enshrine environmental rights for all citizens has been delayed for at least another year after it failed to gain traction ahead of a looming deadline.

ACA 16, also known as the green amendment, sought to add a line to the state Constitution’s Declaration of Rights affirming that all people “shall have a right to clean air and water and a healthy environment.”

The single sentence sounds straightforward enough, but by the start of last week, the proposal had not yet made it through the state Assembly or moved into the state Senate. Both houses would need to pass the proposal by June 27 in or- [See Constitution, B4]



ASSEMBLY Constitutional Amendment 16 was held until next year as its chances of passage looked slim. Above, wildfire smoke shrouds L.A. in 2020. BRIAN VANDER BRUG Los Angeles Times

SPORTS ON THE BACK: How key injuries will affect Dodgers’ postseason blueprint. B10

Instagram famous, Inverness infamous

[**Boat**, from B1] separates the Point Reyes Peninsula from mainland Marin County.

The vessel “endearingly termed ‘the shipwreck’” is on National Park Service land and will eventually be removed, Anela Kopshever, a spokeswoman for Point Reyes National Seashore, said in an email. “The boat has deteriorated over time, but recent winter storms, king tides, and vandalism has contributed to its current state.”

But first, another wreck: This spring, she said, the Park Service has been more focused on removing the Westerly, a boat that crashed in late March near Chimney Rock on the Point Reyes Headlands, killing a Dungeness crab fisherman.

Kopshever said the Westerly, which park officials hope to pull off the rocks by the end of this summer, “has critical environmental and wildlife impact,” with nets, crab pots, the engine block and other materials threatening seabirds.

The Point Reyes, she said, is not currently affecting the environment or wildlife — mostly, it endangers reckless humans — and there is not yet a set date for its removal.

Still, whether they love it or hate it, townsfolk in Inverness say it's time for the boat to go.

“I’m so over it. It’s just a sad story,” said Rebecca Dixon, whose business, Dixon Marine Services, a wetlands restoration firm, sits in front of the dilapidated vessel.

On a fence behind her business, beside the path most walk to reach the S.S. Point Reyes, a metal sign reads: “HAVE SOME RESPECT.”

The Point Reyes Peninsula, surrounded by cold, churning waters, treacherous crags and impenetrable fog, has spelled doom for generations of seafarers.

Starting with the San Agustin — a three-masted Spanish galleon lost in Drake’s Bay in 1595 — more than 50 vessels are known to have wrecked around the Point. They include “lumber ships and oil tankers, fishing scows and dairy schooners,” according to the National Park Service.

On a windswept bluff near the Point Reyes Lighthouse, a trail sign, quoting an 1887 newspaper article, reads: “Punta de los Reyes — Point of the Kings — Spanish navigators named it ... and they did well to fear it. God help the hapless mariner who drifts upon it.”

Though this is a place of briny lore, the fate of the Point Reyes has been greatly exaggerated.

For starters: It is not a shipwreck. Viral social media posts claim it is a 380-foot steamship — which is longer than a football field and about 10 times its actual size — and that it crashed 100 years ago.

“That’s just silly,” said Freedom Rocca, whose late grandfather, an Indigenous Coast Miwok fisherman, was one of the boat’s last owners.

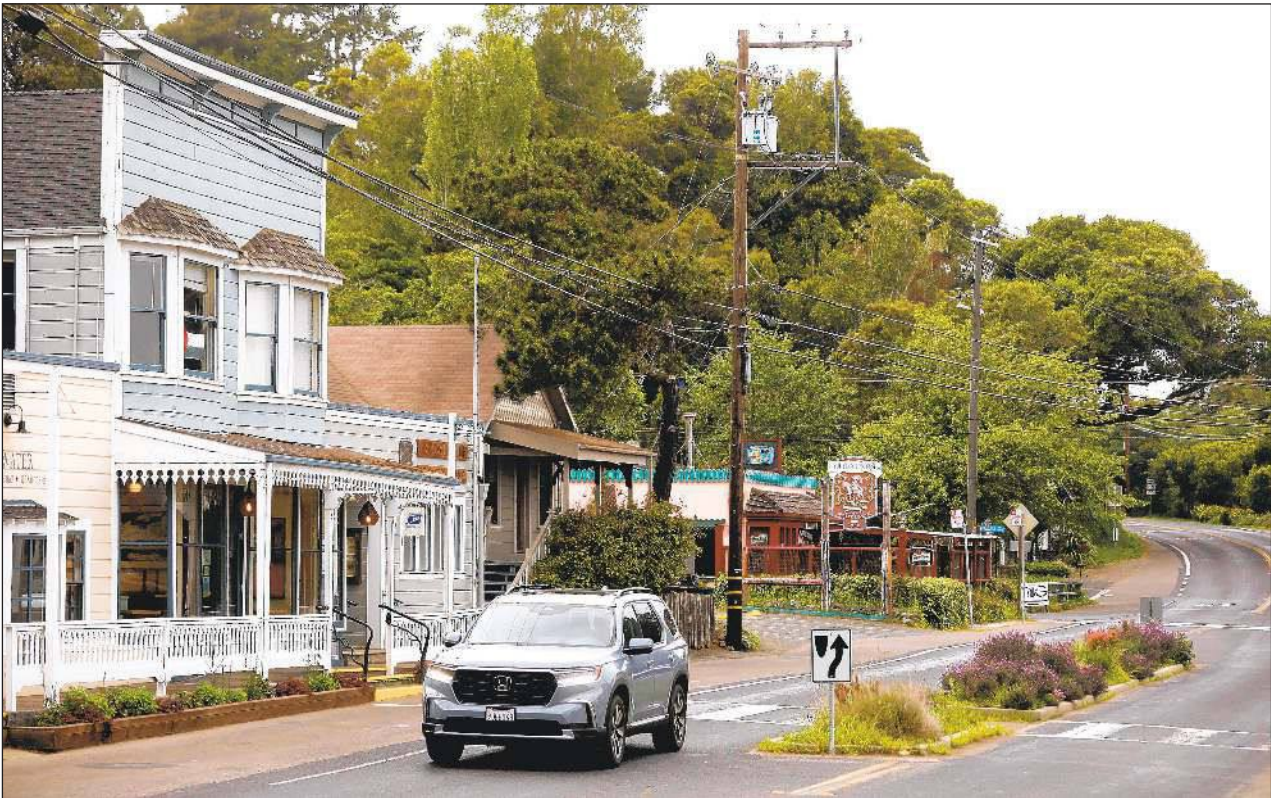
She said her grandfather, Merrel Rocca Sr., sold the boat to a man who intended to restore it but eventually abandoned it on the shore.

Rocca, 41, grew up in Marshall, an oyster-farming town where fishing boats were a common sight. She has long been baffled by the



Photographs by GENARO MOLINA Los Angeles Times

DIANA OPPENHEIM of Detroit, left, visiting the Point Reyes with friend Charity Kahn, said the boat brings “joy and awe and mystery.”



SOME RESIDENTS of Inverness, Calif., want the wreck removed. “I’m so over it,” one business owner said.

fame of the Point Reyes.

“Sometimes, I’ll go to art galleries, and it’s like, ‘There it is! The boat!’” People point it. They photograph it. ... I don’t understand what the big deal is. It’s a boat that’s tipped on the side of the beach.”

Still, she wishes she knew more about it, and about her grandfather, who died in 1989, when she was 6.

“The older I get, the cooler I think it is,” Rocca said. “I’m like, you know what, that’s my grandfather’s boat.”

Ownership of the land where the Point Reyes sits has changed over the years, which has complicated the vessel’s removal.

Multiple federal and state agencies have jurisdiction in the bay and surrounding areas, and they often tussle over who is responsible for paying to clean up crashed boats and other marine junk.

In 2022, the California State Lands Commission

unsuccessfully sought a \$14.9-million grant from the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration to clean up marine debris along the coast of Sonoma and Marin counties.

The project would have funded the cleanup of hundreds of discarded tires in Marconi Cove, which lie in eelgrass beds that would otherwise serve as fish nurseries, as well as a collapsing pier in Bodega Bay. And it would have paid to remove 14 vessels — including the Point Reyes and the American Challenger, a 90-foot fishing boat that broke free in 2021 while being towed from Puget Sound, Wash., to Mexico to be scrapped. It got stuck on a rocky reef in the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, about an hour north of Inverness.

The NOAA “did not explain why our grant application was not selected,” Sheri Pemberton, a spokeswoman for the lands commission, said in an email.

The American Challenger was uninsured, leaving public agencies, including the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Coast Guard, responsible for the multimillion-dollar salvage operation. The boat remains.

Rich Moorier, a spokesman for Point Reyes National Seashore, said officials are monitoring the deterioration of the Point Reyes. A potential removal, he said, could be funded by the park.

After years of slow decay, the Point Reyes really started falling apart after it caught fire in 2016, shortly after an image was posted to Instagram that showed arcing sparks from someone apparently burning steel wool and spinning it, a photographic technique called light painting.

The fire badly damaged the boat’s stern. Eventually, the starboard side of its hull — which bore the vessel’s much-photographed name

— collapsed, and a grinning, green skull and crossbones were painted on the front of its cabin.

Still, the tourists come. On a recent, misty Tuesday, Raj Singh, who owns the Inverness general store in front of the boat, said it is getting more dangerous.

“The last year or so, it’s really gotten bad,” he said. “It’s deteriorated to a point where they have to get rid of it because ... people do stupid things.”

The boat was stuck in the mud when Singh, who emigrated from England, bought the store two decades ago. He used to have an outdoor oyster bar next to the store that he called the Sunkin Boat, and he sells hoodies with its image.

“Some people don’t like the eyesore. And there are people like us who just think it’s cool,” he said. When it is eventually removed, “we definitely will miss it — but I know a lot of people won’t.”

Outside, a steady stream

of people parked in Singh’s parking lot, tramped through the damp grass and crossed a rickety wooden plank fashioned as a bridge over the ankle-deep water flowing in front of the boat after recent rains.

Duncan Shaw, a professional bike rider from Inverness, Scotland, showed up with his neon-green Marin Bikes two-wheeler, shooting selfies with the Point Reyes in the background.

“I just did a little video on Instagram. I said I was in California for a week and haven’t seen a cloud in the sky, and as soon as I showed up here, it started raining,” like in his off-wet hometown, Shaw said. “The power of Inverness is far-reaching.”

Diana Oppenheim, a yoga teacher who lived for several years in San Francisco but moved home to Detroit during the COVID-19 pandemic, choked up when she saw the Point Reyes. It was her first visit in years.

She used to lead volunteer groups in Point Reyes National Seashore, doing dune restoration followed by yoga on the beach. Often, they would stop at the wreck to eat lunch and take photos.

“If the ship had a life to it, it would have no idea that it was still just sitting and bringing so much joy and awe and mystery to people,” she said.

Oppenheim was traveling with her friend Charity Kahn, a meditation teacher and composer of children’s music from Oakland who just released “The Vegan Album,” brimming with lyrics such as: *Oh if you care about animals / And you love ‘em and adore ‘em / And you wanna be kind / Don’t eat ‘em anymore.*

Kahn said the dilapidated boat, to her, represents the march of time, “even though we try to avoid impermanence.”

“It’s this human creation on the edge of earth,” she said. “And yet, at the same time, it’s receding back into earth and becoming earth again.”

Rematch turns off some voters

[**Voters**, from B1] vote, the poll found.

More than 1 in 3 voters in the state said they weren’t likely to vote because “special interests and big money are controlling things,” and almost 3 in 10 voters said they weren’t well informed about the issues and the candidates.

“It’s clear that when it comes to our politics, belief is low and cynicism is high,” Jonathan Mehta Stein, the executive director of California Common Cause, said in a statement.

California’s ballot on Nov. 5 will be a lengthy one, including the presidential election, a growing list of statewide ballot initiatives and several competitive legislative races that could determine which party controls Congress. Some races in purple areas are expected to be won on razor-thin margins.

Overall, the poll found that the groups that appear

to be most inclined to vote are over the age of 65, white voters, Republicans, homeowners and those with postgraduate degrees.

The groups in which the fewest people said they were likely to vote include voters who are young, Black or Asian American, have no post-high school education, or are naturalized citizens.

“It’s pretty much what we’ve seen in past elections — that older voters, white voters, the better educated voters are the most likely to turn out,” DiCamillo said.

The likelihood of voter participation varied widely by race, the poll found. Among white respondents, 90% said they were highly likely to vote. The share was 66% among Black voters, 70% among Latino voters and 62% among Asian American voters.

The foundation provided special funding to focus on Asian Americans, California’s fastest-growing demo-

graphic group, DiCamillo said.

The poll used voter-roll information to find voters who requested voting materials in Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese, then asked the poll questions in those languages. (The poll always asks questions in both English and Spanish.)

The results give “a better read of those voting constituencies than we’ve ever had in the past,” DiCamillo said, and suggest that there are wide disparities in voting propensity among Asian Americans.

Nearly 2 in 3 Vietnamese Americans described themselves as highly likely to vote. That rate rose to 71% among other Asian American and Pacific Islander groups, including Filipino and Japanese Americans.

By comparison, slightly less than half of Korean Americans and 54% of Chinese Americans said they were likely to vote.



LUIS SINCO Los Angeles Times

A VOTER walks among empty voting booths in 2020 after casting a ballot at the Forum in Inglewood.

The poll also asked registered voters what could make them more engaged in the general election.

White and Asian American voters were most likely to say that their chances of voting would rise if they felt that “ballot measures or candidates would advance my interests.”

Latinos were most likely to say that their chances of voting would increase if “election results were more trustworthy.” And Black voters most frequently said

that they would be more likely to vote if they “had access to an unbiased and trusted source of news about the election.”

Christian Arana, a vice president of the Latino Community Foundation, said in a statement that investment in voter education is crucial to ensure that voters “understand the significance of their vote and the influence they hold.”

Voters under the age of 30 were four times more likely than voters over 65 to say

that “getting more information about how and when to vote” could improve their chances of participation.

They were also far more likely to say that their voting behavior could change if voting were more convenient, or if they had assistance from “a person or group that I trust to help me better understand the issues and the candidates.”

DiCamillo cautioned that 78% of respondents rating themselves as highly likely to vote does not mean a prediction of 78% turnout. Most voters have good intentions about voting, he said, “but they probably overestimate it.”

During the 2020 presidential election, more than 80% of registered voters cast ballots in California, the highest percentage since 1976.

The poll was conducted May 29 to June 4 in five languages. The margin of error for the overall sample of registered voters was estimated to be plus or minus 2 percentage points, and could be higher for subgroups.

CITY & STATE



ARMANDO FRANCA Associated Press

CALIFORNIA HEALTH officials have long endorsed clean syringe programs as a proven way to prevent HIV and hepatitis C from running rampant as people share contaminated needles while injecting illegal drugs.

Judge halts ban on syringe programs for IV drug users

El Dorado County is barred from enforcing ordinance during legal battle with the state.

By Emily Alpert Reyes

El Dorado County cannot enforce its ban on programs that hand out clean syringes as a legal battle continues between the county and the California Department of Public Health, a Superior Court judge has ruled.

Judge Gary S. Slossberg granted a preliminary injunction to prevent El Dorado County from enforcing an ordinance that makes it unlawful to operate syringe programs in its unincorporated areas.

The judge said he was not weighing in on the heated arguments for or against syringe programs, which provide sterile needles to people who use drugs, but whether the Department of Public Health had a “reasonable probability” of prevailing in its argument that the county ordinance clashes with state law.

Friday’s decision does not end the courtroom dispute over whether the ban passed by the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors was preempted by state law, as public health officials have argued, or opposing claims by county officials that the syringe program was improperly approved by

the state. Slossberg said Friday that the preliminary injunction is meant to remain in place pending a later trial.

The Department of Public Health filed suit against El Dorado County and its county seat, Placerville, this year contending that their bans on syringe programs defied the state health and safety code.

The state health department first authorized the nonprofit Sierra Harm Reduction Coalition to operate a syringe program in the county four years ago. State officials have long endorsed such programs as a proven way to prevent HIV and hepatitis C from running rampant as people share contaminated syringes.

California law gives the public health agency the power to approve syringe programs anywhere that deadly or disabling infections might spread through used needles, “notwithstanding any other law.”

Local bans on syringe programs have nonetheless sprung up across California as city and county officials argue that handing out free syringes does more harm than good. El Dorado County leaders passed their rule in December, which was followed in February by a similar ordinance in Placerville.

The lawsuit lodged by the California Department of Public Health drew objections from El Dorado County leaders: Earlier this year, Dist. Atty. Vern Pierson

called it “madness” and argued that California officials were “seeking to impose the normalization of hard-core drug use.”

In a cross-complaint filed against the Department of Public Health, the county said that the syringe program approved by the state had caused “profound nuisance and public safety impacts,” including a “drastic increase in discarded needles,” and that overdoses had risen since it started.

The county said in a legal filing that since the ban went into effect, “there has been a reduction of syringe waste, decreased incidents of public nuisance, and a resulting reduction of the burdens on law enforcement.”

It also accused the public health department of failing to follow state requirements when it approved the syringe program.

The judge did not weigh in on the cross-complaint lodged by El Dorado County at the Friday hearing. In a court filing, California officials said studies show that syringe programs provide important resources for needle disposal and play a crucial role in preventing overdoses. They credited the Sierra Harm Reduction Coalition with handing out thousands of boxes of Narcan, a brand of naloxone, a medication that reverses the effects of an opioid overdose.

The Department of Public Health argued in a legal filing that stopping the sy-

ringe program would be likely to ramp up HIV and hepatitis C infections among people who use drugs, increasing state costs for their care; lead to more deaths from drug overdoses; and reduce access to options for syringe disposal, among other harmful effects.

Because of the bans, “our most vulnerable, stigmatized, and marginalized community members are actively being denied lifesaving interventions,” Sierra Harm Reduction Coalition interim executive director Shilo Jama said in a court filing.

Slossberg said that although he was preventing the El Dorado County ordinance from being enforced, the county might have other mechanisms to address nuisance issues that were not addressed by the decision.

Pierson, the district attorney, said in a statement Friday that “we will propose narrowing the ordinance” in response to comments made by the judge.

The California Department of Public Health said in a statement that it was “pleased with the court’s decision that upholds that state’s role in protecting the public’s health while this case proceeds.”

The Friday ruling applies only to the ordinance passed by El Dorado County. Attorney Mona Ebrahimi, who represents the city of Placerville, said a hearing involving the city had been postponed.

Allegedly drunk in class, teacher avoids charges

Leading a class while intoxicated is not a crime, Sutter County prosecutors say.

By Salvador Hernandez

A 57-year-old second-grade teacher arrested after allegedly teaching class drunk will not be charged, prosecutors announced.

Wendy Munson, 57, was arrested Oct. 2 after Sutter County sheriff’s deputies received reports of a staff member who appeared to be intoxicated at Nuestro Elementary School in Live Oak.

Despite the arrest, prosecutors said last week there wasn’t enough evidence to show a crime had been committed.

“While the district attorney’s office agrees that it is highly inappropriate to teach while intoxicated, it is, unfortunately, not illegal,” the statement said.

Deputies arrived to find Munson in the middle of class, allegedly showing signs she was intoxicated.

In a press release issued at the time of the arrest, deputies said video showed Munson drove to school, adding she failed a sobriety test afterward.

She was taken into custody on suspicion of driving under the influence and child endangerment.

Sutter County Dist. Atty. Jennifer Dupré said that several hours after deputies had been called, Munson’s blood alcohol level was measured in separate tests at 0.20% and 0.19%. A level of 0.08% is considered intoxicated for motorists in California.

Munson did not respond to a request for comment.

The district attorney’s office announced June 10 that no charges would be filed against Munson after an eight-month investigation

failed to produce enough evidence to meet the legal requirements of the charges.

Dupré said the investigation included interviews with current and past students of the second-grade teacher.

She said that investigators could not prove Munson was already drunk when she got to work, or if she began to drink at the school.

Although video of Munson driving to school was found, it did not show she was intoxicated at that time, Dupré said.

“She doesn’t get out of the car and tumble or anything, so that didn’t help us,” Dupré said.

Prosecutors were also unable to meet the legal requirements for the child endangerment charge, officials said, “as there was no specific information indicating that the children in Munson’s class were placed in a position where their persons or health were endangered.”

Prosecutors would have had to prove that Munson’s students were in actual danger during her time at the class, she said, a situation that did not occur.

“The person has to have placed them in a position where they are in danger, not might be in danger,” Dupré said.

At the end of the investigation, the incident appeared to be a personnel matter with the school and district, she said.

“The behavior is reprehensible,” Dupré said. “But it doesn’t violate the penal code to teach kids when they’re drunk.”

Munson’s employment status with the Nuestro Elementary School District was unclear.

The district website did not list her as a teacher.

Nuestro schools Supt. Bal Dhillon did not immediately respond to a request for comment or questions about Munson’s employment status.

Killer of Pomona cop gets a life sentence

The 45-year-old shot at officers from behind a door before a 15-hour standoff.

By Caroline Petrow-Cohen

A Pomona man who in 2018 shot and killed a police officer while barricaded behind a door has been sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole, according to the office of Superior Court Judge Mike Camacho.

Isaias De Jesus Valencia, 45, was found guilty in May of first-degree murder and several counts of attempted murder, court records show. On top of a life sentence, Camacho gave Valencia a separate sentence of 278 years to life.

In March 2018, two Pomona Police Department officers responded to reports of reckless driving and pursued the vehicle involved for a short distance after it failed to pull over.

The vehicle crashed into a parked car near the 1400 block of South Palomares Street, where Valencia exited and led the officers inside an apartment building.

Valencia barricaded himself behind the door of a unit as the officers tried to detain

him. He fired six shots, striking Officer Gregory Casillas in the head and Officer Alex Nguyen in the cheek.

Both officers were rushed to the hospital, where Casillas died after just six months on the job, the Pomona Police Department said.

“My scars run deeper than my face,” Nguyen said at the sentencing hearing, according to CBS News. “Not a day goes by that I don’t see, feel or think about my partner.”

Casillas was a 30-year-old father from Upland.

The shootings led to a 15-hour standoff between Valencia and authorities, which ended when Los Angeles County sheriff’s deputies took him into custody.

Valencia has a history of arrests in the Pomona area, public records obtained by The Times show.

He was sent to state prison roughly nine years ago for illegally possessing a firearm and discharging a gun in a school zone, as well as destruction of jail property, according to a California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation spokesperson. Valencia was released on probation around a year later.

According to CBS News, Valencia refused to go to court for his sentencing last week and appeared on camera from his jail cell.

L.A. will pay Van Nuys woman who lost an arm in dog attack \$7.5 million

Suit alleged that city shelter staff failed to inform adopter of pit bull’s bite history.

By Dakota Smith

A Van Nuys woman whose arm was amputated after she was attacked by a dog adopted from a city animal shelter will receive up to \$7.5 million in a settlement approved by the Los Angeles City Council.

Argelia Alvarado, 74, was severely injured by a pit bull named O’Gee in her backyard in September 2020.

Alvarado’s son, Brent, had adopted O’Gee from the city’s East Valley Animal Shelter. The dog had arrived there in May 2020 after biting a jogger on the arms, according to a lawsuit Alvarado filed against the city, alleging negligence.

On June 13, 2020, a supervisor at the shelter approved putting O’Gee in the main kennels, and the next day, a different supervisor allowed him to be listed for adoption to the public, the suit said.

The lawsuit alleged that shelter staff failed to provide



ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

THE LOS ANGELES City Council approved the \$7.5-million settlement Friday.

Brent with written notice of O’Gee’s bite history, as required by state law.

The attack on Alvarado “lasted at least 20 minutes and was a savage mauling in which both of Plaintiff Argelia’s arms were brutally shredded, with her right arm broken into pieces and almost entirely severed above her elbow,” according to the lawsuit filed in July 2021.

Alvarado’s right arm could not be saved, and her left arm was also badly injured, “resulting in permanent disability of the left arm and the whole body,” according to the lawsuit.

O’Gee was euthanized after the attack.

Neither City Atty. Hydee Feldstein Soto nor the attorney representing Alvarado immediately responded to a request for comment after the City Council vote Friday.

The settlement in Alvarado’s lawsuit comes about two weeks after Leslie Corea, a longtime L.A. Animal Services employee, was severely mauled by a dog at the

city’s San Pedro shelter. Corea told KNBC-TV that she has had three surgeries, adding: “My thigh is half gone.”

Both city employees and animal activists have expressed alarm about the crowded and dangerous state of the city’s shelters.

Animal Services General Manager Staycee Dains wrote in an email to the public last month that the overcrowding crisis “has put staff, volunteers and animals in harm’s way.”



IRFAN KHAN Los Angeles Times

ISAIAS DE JESUS VALENCIA is arrested March 10, 2018, in Pomona. He has received a life sentence.

Environmental amendment effort is shelved

[**Constitution**, from B1] der to get it on voter ballots this fall.

Assemblymember Isaac G. Bryan (D-Los Angeles), who authored the bill, said he decided to hold it until next year so he could strengthen its language and improve its chances of success. That means it wouldn't actually go into effect until 2026, if it passes.

"We simply don't have enough time this election cycle to craft the comprehensive and inspired amendment language California deserves," Bryan said in a post on the social media site X. "We will keep working and building for the climate justice our communities need."

The amendment had gained some broad support,

including backing from Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas (D-Hollister), according to Bryan, who is also chair of the Committee on Natural Resources.

The editorial board of the Los Angeles Times in April endorsed the proposal, noting that "in California, of all places, citizens should have the chance to weigh in on whether a healthy environment is a right on par with life, liberty, safety, happiness and privacy, which are all spelled out in the constitution."

But it also drew opposition. The California Chamber of Commerce called it a "job killer" and said it had far-reaching negative consequences that would stunt housing development, infrastructure and clean energy



HIGH ARSENIC levels in drinking water have forced the use of bottled water in some communities.

MYUNG J. CHUN Los Angeles Times

projects, among other concerns.

The group said compliance costs could lead to economic impacts for businesses, communities and local governments. The group also voiced fear that the amendment could be used to halt any development projects that release air emissions, wastewater or other environmental discharge, including key transportation projects such as high-speed rail.

"While we are pleased the measure will not move forward this year, the proponents can be sure the proposal will be met with powerful opposition should it be brought back in the future," said Denise Davis, a spokesperson for the Chamber of Commerce.

Reached by phone, Bryan said he decided to hold the proposal for a year because he was "running out of time."

"We've got a budget we've got to pass, we've got a lot on our plate, and the more conversations I have with legal scholars and front-line communities and other interested stakeholders, the more complex it seems to get," he said. "And so I think we have a much deeper understanding than we did when we started this process, and I think we have some options about how we would like to bring this back next time. Ultimately, I just

wish I had started this process a year ago."

Bryan said he's been studying similar amendments from other states that have already added such clauses to their constitutions to learn from their strengths and weaknesses.

It is important to "strike the kind of appropriate balance of power for California knowing that it will have a massive ripple effect," he said.

Indeed, California would not be the first state to affirm these environmental rights. Pennsylvania and Montana enshrined similar language in their constitutions in 1971 and 1972, respectively. New York added the right to a "healthful environment" to its document in 2021 with overwhelming support from voters.

More than a dozen other states — including Arizona, Texas, Hawaii and Florida — are considering their own green amendments, with additional proposals anticipated in at least five other states, according to a recent report from the Sierra Club.

California Environmental Voters, an advocacy group that backed California's proposal, said it understood the decision to hold the amendment given the time constraints.

But the amendment's failure to launch also reflects the need for more action and leadership, said Mike

Young, the group's senior political and organizing director.

"We're in a situation where we need leadership on these issues, we need to continue to step up, we need to actually push harder, because we see that we're falling behind," he said. "It's a really critical time. This is why we really want not just leadership from members like Assemblyman Bryan, but we need big leadership from the Legislature to really prioritize these things and make them happen. Because without that, it can just get really lost."

Last month, the group hosted a virtual town hall meeting for young climate activists who were eager to see the proposal passed. Nearly 60 attendees gathered in the online Zoom meeting, during which Bryan said he also saw the amendment as a means to hold powerful entities accountable.

Residents in Pennsylvania, for instance, have already used their green amendment as a tool for litigation, including a 2017 lawsuit against the Trump administration for delays in protecting residents' health against ozone and smog.

Last year, a group of young environmental activists in Montana won a landmark lawsuit in which a judge ruled that state agencies were violating their con-

stitutional right to a clean and healthful environment by allowing fossil fuel development.

"This is pragmatic — it's what the people deserve," Bryan told the group. "We're 40 years behind other states."

What's more, California has already taken other actions to insulate itself against shifting federal interests, he said. Those efforts include 2017 legislation declaring California a "sanctuary state" in a rebuke of Trump-era immigration policies.

In 2022, California also codified abortion and other reproductive rights in its state Constitution after the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe vs. Wade.

Bryan said on the phone that his proposal to enshrine similar protections for clean air and water is not intended to reflect pessimism about where federal environmental policy is headed, but rather a posture of "better safe than sorry."

Postponing the amendment for another year won't lessen its impact, he said.

"If the federal government were to swing in a non-environmentally friendly or sustainable way, 2026 is still in the midst of that," he said. "If that does come to happen, then I think this carries just as much weight, if not more weight, to do it then."

Obituaries

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Elliot Zachary Seff
Mount Sinai Mem Parks -
Simi Valley 800-600-0076
www.mountsinainaparks.org

Jeffrey A Shulkin, MD
Jeffrey A. Shulkin, MD, age 60, has died after a 5 year battle with Glioblastoma. He is survived by his wife, Cari, and two sons, Aaron and Noah, his parents, Dr. Edwin and Ellen Sue Shulkin, sisters Cindy (Ariel), Jennifer (Howard), Allison (Edward), and nieces and nephews, Liron (Shir), Yaniv, Rinat, Jessica, Jacob, Sara, Adam, and Daniel. He is and will be profoundly missed.

Share a memory

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please go to
latimes.com/guestbooks

Sadako TANI

SADAKO TANI, 99, a Carpinteria, CA born Nisei, passed away peacefully at her residence in Monterey Park on May 29, 2024. She is survived by her sons, Robbie (Roxanne) and Alvin Tani; daughter, Linda (David) Okino; grandchildren, Jordan and Kendall Tani, Darren and Kristin Okino; other relatives, cousins, nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Masao, and her son, Michael.

A gathering of family and friends will be held on Monday, June 24, 1:00PM-2:30PM at Fukui Mortuary Chapel, 707 E. Temple St., Los Angeles.

The family requests casual attire.

<https://www.fukui-mortuary.com/>

(213) 626-0441

Ajmal Hasan Khan

(1961 - 2024)

With profound sadness, we announce the passing of Ajmal Khan.

Born in Nigeria to Indian parents, Ajmal grew up with an infectious passion for life. He was a well-known globally renowned entrepreneur, property developer, investor, and philanthropist, loved by all worldwide. His radiant smile, infinite kindness, boundless generosity brought joy to everyone he touched. His friends included royalty, celebrities, and business leaders in all walks of life all around the world, but he was as good a friend to them as he was to the porters, waiters, housekeepers and other helpers he met every day.

Ajmal is survived by his beloved mother Sajida, brothers Aslam and Arshad as well as sisters Sabeeha and Mariam and loving partner Anisha Sabnani. Despite his enormous schedule, he loyally placed his family at the forefront of his life.

The void left behind all over the world will be cherished through countless memories. A private muslim funeral was held in Toronto on May 25th, and a memorial is planned for a later date.

Feel free to share your favorite memories and condolences with the family.

If the definition of a life well lived is to have loved and been loved, then Ajmal's was surely the best of lives, although far too short.

Peering into the future, his selfless qualities provide us all with solace, as these qualities are truly timeless and they do not go unrewarded.

Rest in peace, Ajmal, the future is truly exciting.

Your impact will be deeply missed.

The Khan Family

Today in Southern California

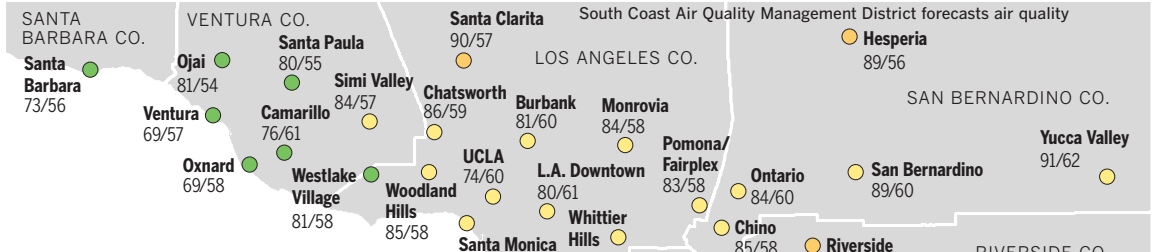
Low clouds early, then rather sunny: The day will start with areas of low clouds along the coast and patchy low clouds in the inland valleys. Most areas will have sunshine during the afternoon hours. There will not be much change in temperatures through midweek; however, a warm-up will take place heading into Friday and the weekend. Low clouds will continue to form each morning through the week.

5-day forecasts

High/low temperatures are average forecasts for entire zone.

	L.A. Basin	Valleys	Beaches	Mountains	Deserts
Today	80 61 Some sun	85 58 Partly sunny	73 61 Partly sunny	73 40 Lots of sunshine	101 72 Breezy in p.m.
Wednesday	Some sun 79/61	Sunny 82/62	Some sun 73/59	Sunny 74/44	Sunny 102/72
Thursday	Some sun 78/59	Mostly sunny 86/60	Some sun 74/58	Sunny 77/40	Sunny 106/76
Friday	Some sun 79/61	Sunny 88/62	Some sun 72/58	Sunny; warm 81/46	Sunny; warm 112/80
Saturday	Partly sunny 80/62	Mostly sunny 87/64	Partly sunny 69/60	Lots of sun 82/45	Sunny; warm 113/81

Air quality



Surf and sea

POINT CONCEPTION TO MEXICO

Inner waters: Wind south becoming southwest at 10-15 knots. Waves 4-6 feet with a mixed swell west at 4 feet and southwest at 2 feet.

Surf zone: The risk of strong rip currents is high at S.D., L.A. and Ventura county beaches today and moderate at S.B. and O.C. beaches.

County	Height	Period	Direction	Temp
Santa Barbara	2-4'	10 sec	WSW	61
Ventura	3-5'	10 sec	WSW	61
Los Angeles	3-5'	14 sec	SSW	66
Orange	2-4'	14 sec	SSW	65
San Diego	3-6'	14 sec	SSW	66

Tides

L.A. Outer Harbor, in feet.

Today	8:34a	3:2 Hi	2:15a	0.3 Lo
	7:25p	5.7 Hi	12:50p	2.3 Lo
Wed.	9:22a	3.3 Hi	2:51a	-0.2 Lo
	7:58p	6.0 Hi	1:27p	2.4 Lo

UV index

Minutes to burn for sensitive people

Las Vegas, 10	Phoenix, 10
Los Angeles, 10	San Francisco, 10

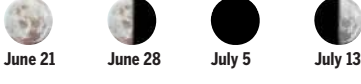
California cities*

City	Mon.			Today			Wed.		
	Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Hi	Lo		Hi	Lo	
Anaheim	74	61	--	79	61		81	61	
Avalon/Catalina	65	57	--	70	58		68	58	
Bakersfield	86	63	--	90	63		92	64	
Barstow	95	62	--	96	66		100	68	
Big Bear Lake	72	39	--	73	40		74	44	
Bishop	92	46	Tr	84	48		89	54	
Burbank	78	59	--	81	60		80	60	
Camarillo	77	61	--	76	61		74	58	
Chatsworth	80	62	--	86	59		84	60	
Chino	81	57	--	85	58		87	58	
Compton	72	62	--	78	63		78	60	
Dana Point	70	62	--	72	62		72	61	
Death Valley	107	94	--	99	91		107	98	
Del Mar	71	62	--	66	62		66	61	
Escondido	75	56	--	80	55		81	55	
Eureka	61	45	--	60	46		60	51	
Fallbrook	72	58	--	80	56		80	55	
Fresno	86	61	--	90	61		93	61	
Fullerton	73	63	--	79	63		79	63	
Hemet	80	53	Tr	88	53		88	55	
Hesperia	83	50	--	86	57		88	55	
Huntington Beach	73	64	--	72	65		71	62	
Idyllwild	72	56	--	79	58		81	56	
Irvine	73	63	--	77	62		77	61	

Sun and moon

Today's rise/set

	Los Angeles Co.	Orange Co.	Ventura Co.
Sun	5:42a/8:07p	5:41a/8:05p	5:45a/8:12p
Moon	5:16p/2:55a	5:14p/2:54a	5:21p/2:58a



Almanac

Monday Downtown readings

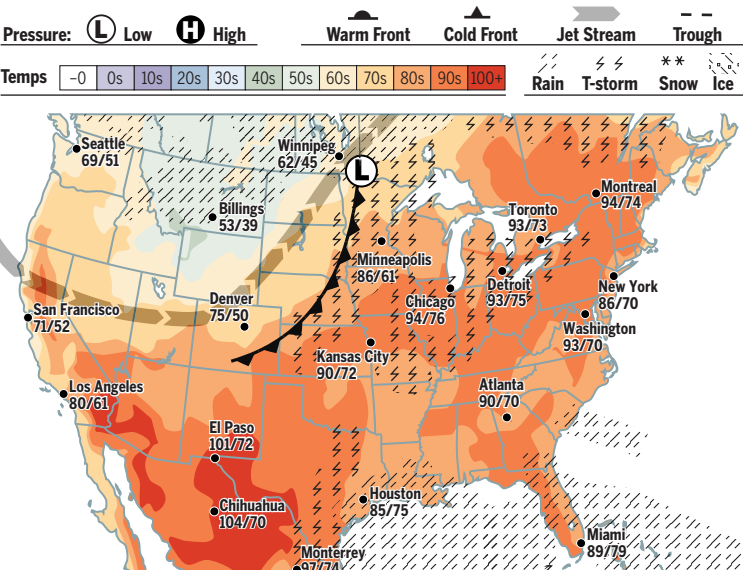
Temperature	Los Angeles	Fullerton	Ventura*
High/low	74/62	73/63	68/56
Normal high/low	77/62	79/63	71/55
High/low a year ago	79/63	83/62	68/56
Record high/date	105/1917	92/2016	102/1981
Record low/date	49/1885	59/2016	47/1961

Precipitation	Los Angeles	Fullerton	Ventura*
24-hour total (as of 2 p.m.)	0.00	0.00	0.00
Season total (since Oct. 1)	22.15	16.59	24.79
Last season (Oct. 1 to date)	28.03	21.35	27.06
Season norm (Oct. 1 to date)	14.21	11.76	16.01
Humidity (high/low)	77/62	86/54	89/62

City	Mon.			Today			Wed.		
	Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Hi	Lo		Hi	Lo	
L.A. D'town/USC	74	62	--	80	61		79	61	
L.A. Int'l. Airport	71	60	--	72	62		72	60	
Laguna Beach	66	62	--	71	62		72	62	
Lancaster	86	55	--	90	61		90	61	
Long Beach	74	64	--	77	64		77	63	
Mammoth Lakes	64	29	--	63	38		69	43	
Mission Viejo	74	61	--	77	60		76	58	
Monrovia	80	59	--	84	58		83	59	
Monterey	67	48	--	67	49		64	53	
Mt. Wilson	69	57	--	61	55		61	53	
Needles	106	77	--	102	74		105	79	
Newport Beach	70	65	--	72	65		71	63	
Northridge	80	59	--	86	58		83	59	
Oakland	79	53	--	74	53		67	55	
Oceanside	75	60	--	77	59		76	59	
Ojai	80	56	--	81	54		80	57	
Ontario	78	58	--	84	60		82	59	
Palm Springs	100	71	--	101	72		102	72	
Pasadena	77	60	--	82	58		80	58	
Paso Robles	88	46	--	91	47		88	48	
Redding	85	62	--	91	56		96	65	
Riverside	80	56	--	88	58		87	58	
Sacramento	85	59	Tr	90	55		87	54	
San Bernardino	79	57	--	89	60		88	59	

Today in North America

Severe storms in the Midwest: The threat of severe weather will stretch from eastern Nebraska northeastward into Minnesota. The main threat with these storms will be hail, flash flooding and a tornado. Hot weather will scorch most of the Northeast.



U.S. cities

MONDAY'S EXTREMES FOR THE 48 CONTIGUOUS STATES

High 108 in Pecos, Texas

Low 28 in Sunriver, Ore.

City	Monday			Today			City	Monday			Today		
	Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Hi	Lo	Sky		Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Hi	Lo	Sky
Albany	88	63	Tr	94	71	Pc	Seattle	69	51		69	51	Pc
Albuquerque	98	68	--	94	65	Su	Tampa	92	77	.10	94	77	Sh
Anchorage	62	47	--	62	48	Su	Tucson	105	77	--	101	71	Su
Aspen	81	46	--	69	43	Su	Tulsa	94	77	--	91	74	W
Atlanta	92	75	Tr	90	70	Pc	Washington, D.C.	91	71	--	93	70	Su
Austin	96	76	.01	90	73	Ts	Wichita	94	74	--	91	69	W
Baltimore	91	68	--	91	67	Su	World						
Boise	61	47	.03	72	49	Pc	Acapulco	89	79	.04	90	76	Pc
Boston	81	59	--	90	70	Pc	Amsterdam	68	54	--	68	54	Sh
Buffalo	85	70	.05	93	76	Ts	Athens	95	73	Tr	97	79	Su
Burlington, Vt.	87	64	Tr	95	72	Pc	Bangkok	95	77	.07	100	82	Hz
Charleston, S.C.	90	73	--	88	70	Pc	Barcelona	75	66	--	79	66	Su
Charlotte	88	74	.13	89	66	Pc	Berlin	78	61	.13	80	62	Ts
Chicago	97	75	Tr	94	76	Ts	Cabo San Lucas	94	72	--	90	71	Su
Cincinnati	93	75	.04	92	73	Pc	Cairo	98	77	--	97	75	Ts
Cleveland	95	71	.01	96	75	Ts	Dubai	108	93	--	106	91	Su
Columbia, S.C.	91	74	--	90	66	Pc	Dublin	63	48	--	61	44	Cy
Columbus	94	70	Tr	94	74	Pc	Havana	88	76	.12	89	74	Ts
Dallas/Ft.Worth	94	78	.04	91	74	Ts	Ho Chi Minh City	95	81	.13	93	82	Ts
Denver	94	53	--	75	50	Pc	Hong Kong	91	84	.12	90	84	Ts
Detroit	93	69	.36	93	75	Ts	Istanbul	88	70	--	87	71	Su
El Paso	102	80	--	101	72	Su	Jerusalem	90	67	--	93	66	Su
Eugene	69	39	.04	76	46	Su	Johannesburg	63	40	--	67	47	Su
Fort Myers	91	78	--	94	75	Pc	Kuala Lumpur	91	76	.60	92	77	Ts
Hartford	89	59	Tr	96	67	Pc	Lima	67	61	--	67	60	Cy
Honolulu	87	74	.04	87	75	Pc	London	74	50	--	71	53	Pc
Houston	91	78	.28	85	75	R	Madrid	90	61	--	81	56	Pc
Indianapolis	93	75	.04	90	73	Ts	Mecca	113	88	--	112	84	Su
Jacksonville, Fla.	90	72	.02	88	71	Pc	Mexico City	85	56	--	85	60	Su
Kansas City	90	74	--	90	72	W	Montreal	86	64	.01	94	74	Pc
Knoxville	89	73	.49	91	68	Pc	Moscow	75	64	.04	72	59	R
Las Vegas	101	79	--	96	73	Su	Mumbai	90	82	.02	90	83	Ts
Louisville	95	76	--	95	77	Pc	New Delhi	113	93	--	112	90	Hz
Medford	73	46	Tr	83	51	Pc	Paris	75	57	.06	75	59	R
Memphis	88	76	1.06	89	75	Cy	Prague	79	55	.03	84	61	Pc
Miami	88	79	.13	89	79	Pc	Rome	83	59	--	85	64	Su
Milwaukee	93	72	--	90	75	W	Seoul	86	61	--	88	65	Hz
Minneapolis	96	57	1.00	86	61	Ts	Singapore	91	81	.01	89	79	Ts
Nashville	92	73	.34	92	74	Pc	Taipei City	90	81	Tr	91	78	Ts
New Orleans	86	75	1.86	83	80	R	Tokyo	84	77	1.38	71	68	R
New York	83	65	--	86	70	Pc	Vancouver	63	52	.06	65	52	Pc
Norfolk	88	70	--	84	70	Su	Vienna	85	55	--	87	63	Pc
Okahoma City	90	71	--	85	72	W	Key: Su sunny; Pc partly cloudy; Cy cloudy; Fg foggy; Prcp precipitation; Dr drizzle; Hz hazy Sh showers; Ts thunderstorms; R rain; Sn snow; Sf snow flurries; I ice; Rs rain/snow; W windy; Tr trace. Notes: National extremes exclude Alaska and Hawaii. * - data estimated.						
Omaha	92	67	.36	89	66	Ts	Monday's readings as of 2 p.m.						
Orlando	89	76	.06	89	73	Sh	Forecasts by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2024						
Philadelphia	88	66	--	93	70	Su	AccuWeather Get the AccuWeather app						
Phoenix	107	82	--	105	81	Su							
Pittsburgh	94	69	.33	95	74	Ts							
Portland, Ore.	67	50	.07	73	53	Pc							
Providence	79	55	.01	86	66	Pc							

Angels, Anaheim in stalemate over \$5 million

City owes the money, but tainted stadium deal that fell apart complicates things.

BILL SHAIKIN
ON BASEBALL

In a dizzying span of 12 days, the deal collapsed. No longer would Angels owner Arte Moreno buy the Angel Stadium property and anchor his team to Anaheim for decades to come. No longer would he make the vast and desolate parking lots around the stadium come alive with places to eat, drink, live and work. No longer would Angels fans get to count down the days until the old ballpark would be upgraded or a new ballpark would rise next door.

On May 16, 2022, the disclosure of an FBI affidavit alleging Anaheim mayor Harry Sidhu had shared a confidential land appraisal with the Angels in the hope of securing a million-dollar campaign contribution from them forever tainted a stadium sale four years in the making.

On May 23, Sidhu resigned. On May 24, the Anaheim City Council killed the deal. On May 27, the Angels agreed not to contest the decision, and the city agreed to return the \$50

million Moreno had put into escrow.

That left one piece of outstanding business. The sale agreement entitled Moreno to recover \$5 million in “transaction costs” if the city backed out of the deal.

On June 15, the Angels formally asked the city for that \$5 million. Two years later, the city has not paid — and Moreno has not sued.

The two sides appear to be making a push to resolve the matter.

On Tuesday, for the third consecutive meeting, the Anaheim City Council is scheduled to discuss the issue behind closed doors. The council agenda provides no details but notes the city faces “significant exposure to litigation.”

Said city spokesman Mike Lyster: “We continue to talk to see if we can find a way to put this claim behind us in a way that works for everyone. Litigation is in no one’s best interest, and we are confident about a path forward.”

The Angels declined to comment.

Moreno is not shy about litigation, but the city almost certainly would try to broaden a lawsuit into areas Moreno might prefer to avoid.

Moreno could argue the contract language is clear and the city must pay. If a judge agrees, that would be game over.



ASHLEY LANDIS Associated Press

IT HAS BEEN two years since Angels owner Arte Moreno formally asked the city of Anaheim to return \$5 million in “transaction costs” from a failed deal.

In 2023, Sidhu signed a plea deal that acknowledged he “provided confidential negotiating information belonging to the city ... so that the Angels could buy Angel Stadium on terms beneficial to the Angels” and kept that disclosure secret from the rest of the city council.

Neither the FBI affidavit

nor the plea deal alleges the Angels did anything wrong, and a lawyer representing Moreno has told the city that his management company and the Angels “acted in good faith.”

However, the city could argue it should not be bound by the terms of a contract negotiated after the mayor covertly deliv-

ered the city’s playbook to the opposing team.

Anaheim City Atty. Robert Fabela, who told the Angels in a 2022 letter that the unauthorized disclosure of city information “throws all aspects of the ... deal into shadow,” told the council he believed a court would permit the city to depose Moreno and Sidhu in any

litigation.

As the breadth of any lawsuit widens, litigation can go in unpredictable and costly directions.

In 2022, on the day the council killed the deal, councilman Stephen Faessel said: “This is going to be litigated for the next several years.”

There has been no litigation so far.

If the city and the Angels resolve their \$5-million quandary, it will not mean the stadium sale is back on course.

Beyond a cash payout, there could be other opportunities for a modest settlement, given recent skirmishes between Anaheim and the Angels on the construction of a fire station in the stadium parking lot, on the scope of an assessment of what the 58-year-old stadium needs to remain viable for decades to come, and on who pays what for ballpark maintenance and upgrades.

The Angels’ lease at Angel Stadium expires in five years, although the team has options to extend the lease through 2038. Within a decade, Anaheim has walked away from two deals that would have provided a long-term resolution for both the city and the team.

For the moment, detente might be the best both sides can do.

THE DAY IN SPORTS

‘Nervous’ Walsh secures Paris trip

WIRE REPORTS

Gretchen Walsh followed up a world record in the 100-meter butterfly with something that felt just as good.

Her first trip to the Olympics.

Walsh didn’t go quite as fast as a night earlier in the semifinals, but she touched in 55.31 seconds to claim the coveted Olympic berth against a loaded field at the U.S. Olympic swimming trials.

“I was definitely nervous,” Walsh said. “There were a lot of what-ifs. Coming off breaking the world record, I was thinking, ‘Do I need to do that again just to make the team? What if I get third? What’s that even even going to look like?’ ”

No worries. She’s heading to Paris.

So is **Carson Foster** who won the men’s 400 individual medley. And 30-year-old **Nic Fink** won the 100 breaststroke Sunday, the second night of the trials.

ETC. Miles suing to recover wins

Les Miles, who coached Louisiana State to a 2007 national championship, is suing the university over its decision to vacate 37 of his teams’ victories between 2012 and 2015.

The lawsuit filed Monday in federal court in Baton Rouge alleges that LSU never gave Miles a chance to be heard before altering the coach’s career record significantly enough to disqualify him from consideration for the College Football Hall of Fame.

“Les was given no right to be heard, or even advance notice of LSU’s actions, despite LSU being a state-owned and state-run institution that is bound by constitutional safeguards,” Miles’ lawyer, **Peter Ginsberg**, said in a statement.

The decision in June 2023 to vacate the victories stemmed from an NCAA ruling that former Tigers offensive lineman **Vadal Alexander** had received financial benefits that violated rules at the time he played.

Ryan Blaney dominated

NHL PLAYOFF SCHEDULE	
STANLEY CUP FINAL	
1A Florida vs. 2P Edmonton	
Panthers lead, 3-1	
Gm 1	Florida 3, Edmonton 0
Gm 2	Florida 4, Edmonton 1
Gm 3	Florida 4, Edmonton 3
Gm 4	Edmonton 8, Florida 1
Gm 5	Tuesday at Florida, 5
Gm 6	Friday at Edmonton, 5*
Gm 7	Monday at Florida, 5*

*if necessary | Times PDT, p.m.
TV: All games on Channel 7

the inaugural NASCAR Cup Series race at Iowa Speedway on Sunday for his first victory of the season. Blaney led four times for a career-high 201 laps, finishing 0.716 seconds ahead of **William Byron** for his 11th Cup victory.

In the College World Series, Florida ousted North Carolina State 5-4 and will play either Texas A&M or Kentucky in an elimination game Tuesday. Tennessee took control of its bracket with a 6-1 win Sunday night. The Volunteers will play Florida State or North Carolina on Wednesday. Those teams will meet Tuesday in an elimination game.

USC said its football, men’s basketball and women’s basketball games will be broadcast on KSPN/710 starting in August.

Australian Open champion **Aryna Sabalenka** and two-time Wimbledon finalist **Ons Jabeur** ruled themselves out of the Olympic Games in Paris.

The Columbus Blue Jackets fired coach **Pascal Vincent** after one season in which they were one of the NHL’s worst teams. General manager **Don Waddell** announced the firing and said the search for a new coach would begin immediately.

Yankees first baseman **Anthony Rizzo** left Sunday night’s game against Boston in the seventh inning after colliding with Red Sox pitcher **Brennan Bernardino** on a play at first and falling hard on his right arm. The club announced that it was a right lower-arm injury.

Romania recorded only its second victory at the European Championship — and its first in 24 years — with a 3-0 win over Ukraine to give coach **Edward Iordanescu** a late birthday present. In other games, two **Romelu Lukaku** goals were overturned by video review and Belgium fell to a stunning 1-0 loss to Slovakia, and France outlasted Austria 1-0.

The New Orleans Gold sealed a 38-21 victory in the 80th minute with a try by **Taniela Filimone** to beat Rugby Football Club L.A. in Carson on Sunday.

NBA PLAYOFF SCHEDULE	
NBA FINALS	
1 Boston vs. 5 Dallas	
Celtics lead, 3-1	
Gm 1	Boston 107, Dallas 89
Gm 2	Boston 105, Dallas 98
Gm 3	Boston 106, Dallas 99
Gm 4	Dallas 122, Boston 84
Gm 5	Monday at Boston, late
Gm 6	Thursday at Dallas, 5:30*
Gm 7	Sunday at Boston, 5*

*if necessary | Times PDT, p.m.
TV: All games on Channel 7



ADAM HUNGER Associated Press

THE UNITED STATES’ Saurabh Nethralvakar is gleeful at the dismissal of India’s Virat Kohli, left, during the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup cricket match between the countries in Westbury, N.Y., on June 12.

U.S. cricketers hope to extend surprise run through World Cup

A team built on short notice is the sport’s darling as it prepares for Super Eight stage.

BY ANTHONY DE LEON

Three months before the start of the 2024 ICC Men’s T20 World Cup, USA Cricket drastically shifted the program’s direction ahead of the most important tournament in U.S. men’s cricket history, where they would serve as co-host.

USA Cricket ousted chairman Michael Voss and his entire selection committee amid allegations of unfair player selection policies. An influx of youth followed, led by 34-year-old Los Angeles-born Ravi Timbawala, a former U.S. national player and active cricketer.

The organization named Timbawala as chief selector and tasked him with building a competitive roster while the cricket world focused on the United States.

“We were short on time, but we did our best to put everything together,” Timbawala said.

In the lead-up to the World Cup, the team had the opportunity to experiment with different lineups and fine-tune the roster during a series of matches against Canada and Bangladesh.

The U.S. captured a historic 2-1 series victory over Bangladesh, marking its first series win against an International Cricket Council full member nation — a status indicating a country’s well-established and successful cricketing infrastructure.

A team built on short notice has become the unexpected darling of the cricket world, with Team USA continuing its miraculous run as it prepares for the Super Eight stage of the World Cup.

Entering the group stages ranked 18th in the ICC men’s rankings, the team embraced the underdog mentality against some of the world’s best. An upset victory over Pakistan and a narrow loss to India have earned them global respect from major cricket-playing nations.

“In the World Cup, consistently performing well against bigger teams has given us a lot of confidence that this wasn’t a fluke,” said veteran all-rounder Nisarg Patel.

Patel was born in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India, and his family migrated to the U.S. in 2003, settling in Southern California when he was a teenager.

“We went into the tournament as underdogs,” Patel said. “Nobody expected us to beat bigger teams. Nobody expected us to beat Bangladesh or Pakistan. Nobody even expected us to put up a fight against India.”

Throughout the tournament, Patel said the team has displayed a mental toughness that has kept them competing with the kingmakers of the cricket world. He credited the team’s chemistry and cohesion as key to their success.

“It is very heartening to see how the team is doing. Everyone is rallying behind each other, playing as a unit,” Timbawala said.

During the selection process, the committee was

keen on picking players who believed in the team’s potential for success, Timbawala said.

Many of Team USA’s players have never experienced the pressure of competing on the world stage, including playing in front of 31,219 fans in New York against a dominant India team.

“A lot of people have rallied behind the team, and the boys understand the enormous amount of pressure they’re under because you don’t often get to this historic level,” said former Team USA player Abhimanyu Rajp.

It’s a stark contrast to the atmosphere Rajp experienced over a decade ago, playing in front of empty seats in stadiums that were ill-equipped for large crowds.

Rajp, a member of Team USA from 2005 to 2015, is now co-owner of the Los Angeles Lashings, the city’s minor league cricket team, where Timbawala also plays. Additionally, Rajp serves on the board of Los Angeles Cricket, a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting youth cricketers.

He has followed the team from state to state during the World Cup and has witnessed the strong national support, which he always believed was a possibility.

“The U.S. team has already gained a lot of respect with what the boys have done on the field,” Rajp said. “It’s definitely raised a lot of eyebrows in a positive way for the game’s future.”

The hope is that the attention nationwide surrounding the U.S. cricket team will be sustained in the lead-up to the 2028 Los An-

geles Summer Olympics. Advancement into the Super 8 round automatically qualifies the U.S. for the 2026 World Cup in India.

“The amount of exposure this world stage has given is a turning point on where cricket goes in this country,” Timbawala said.

Team USA’s current run, specifically the win over Pakistan, has marked a defining moment.

“This first round of competition has given us a lot of confidence, and hopefully we can take that momentum into the next round,” Patel said.

After qualifying following the cancellation of Friday’s game because of flooding in Florida, the U.S. team spent much of its time cooling down in preparation for travel to the Caribbean for the Super 8 competition stage. The spirited, emerging U.S. team will face another established powerhouse, South Africa, in Antigua on Wednesday.

Wednesday’s matchup will be the first of three for the U.S. as the tournament shifts to a round-robin format. The eight remaining teams are divided into two groups, and each team will compete against the other three in its group. The top two teams from each group will qualify for the semifinals.

England, West Indies and South Africa accompany the U.S. in Group 2.

“These guys have been working hard on their game for a long time, and getting an opportunity to showcase their talent and skills on the world stage has given them extra motivation,” Timbawala said. “It’s very satisfying to see.”

BASEBALL : SUNDAY FLASHBACK

Dodgers' new threads have star power

STANDINGS

Through Sunday

NATIONAL LEAGUE					
West	W	L	Pct.	GB	L10
DODGERS	44	29	.603	—	6-4
San Diego	37	38	.493	8	5-5
Arizona	35	37	.486	8½	6-4
San Francisco	35	37	.486	8½	6-4
Colorado	25	46	.352	18	4-6
Central	W	L	Pct.	GB	L10
Milwaukee	42	29	.592	—	6-4
St. Louis	35	35	.500	6½	6-4
Cincinnati	34	37	.479	8	6-4
Pittsburgh	34	37	.479	8	5-5
Chicago	34	38	.472	8½	3-7
East	W	L	Pct.	GB	L10
Philadelphia	47	24	.662	—	5-5
Atlanta	38	31	.551	8	4-6
Washington	35	36	.493	12	8-2
New York	33	37	.471	13½	8-2
Miami	23	48	.324	24	2-8

AMERICAN LEAGUE					
West	W	L	Pct.	GB	L10
Seattle	43	31	.581	—	7-3
Texas	33	38	.465	8½	4-6
Houston	33	39	.458	9	5-5
ANGELS	28	43	.394	13½	5-5
Oakland	26	48	.351	17	1-9
Central	W	L	Pct.	GB	L10
Cleveland	44	25	.638	—	5-5
Kansas City	41	32	.562	5	4-6
Minnesota	40	32	.556	5½	7-3
Detroit	34	37	.479	11	3-7
Chicago	19	54	.260	27	4-6
East	W	L	Pct.	GB	L10
New York	50	24	.676	—	5-5
Baltimore	47	24	.662	1½	8-2
Boston	37	35	.514	12	6-4
Toronto	35	36	.493	13½	6-4
Tampa Bay	34	38	.472	15	3-7

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Today's games

Dodgers at Colorado	5:30 p.m.
Angels vs. Milwaukee	6:30 p.m.
St. Louis at Miami	3 p.m.
Cincinnati at Pittsburgh	3:30 p.m.
San Diego at Philadelphia	3:30 p.m.
Seattle at Cleveland	3:30 p.m.
Arizona at Washington	3:45 p.m.
Baltimore at New York (AL)	4 p.m.
Boston at Toronto	4 p.m.
Detroit at Atlanta	4:15 p.m.
Tampa Bay at Minnesota	4:30 p.m.
New York (NL) at Texas	5 p.m.
San Francisco at Chicago (NL)	5 p.m.
Houston at Chicago (AL)	5 p.m.
Kansas City at Oakland	6:30 p.m.

SAN FRANCISCO 13, ANGELS 6												
Angels	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.	San Fran.	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.	
Stefanic 2b	5	0	1	0	.286	Wisely ss	6	1	2	3	.313	
Reynolds 3b	2	1	1	0	.317	Ramos cf	6	0	2	0	.326	
Mink cf	2	0	0	0	.191	Bailey c	5	1	2	0	.285	
Ward dh	3	0	0	0	.240	Chapman 1b	4	1	1	1	.234	
Gilmer dh-p	2	0	0	0	.278	Conforto lf	5	1	1	0	.239	
Pillar cf-1b	3	0	1	0	.340	Soler dh	4	3	2	4	.224	
Calhoun lf	1	1	0	0	.296	Flores 1b	2	2	1	0	.217	
O'Hoppe c	2	0	0	0	.281	Brooks 1b	2	1	1	1	.176	
Marble c	2	0	0	0	.220	Slater cf	2	1	2	0	.230	
Neto ss	3	1	1	0	.248	Estela 2b	5	1	2	2	.239	
Schanebl 1b	2	0	1	0	.219	Totals	41	13	16	13		
Adell lf	4	1	1	0	.193							
Tucker lf/3b	3	0	1	0	.180							
Totals	34	6	9	6								

Angels	110	000	004	—	6	9	2
San Francisco	000	900	13x—13	16	0		

Walks—Angels 4, San Francisco 4. **Strikeouts**—Angels 8, San Francisco 5. **E**—Tucker (4), Schanebl (3). **LOB**—Los Angeles 10, San Francisco 10. **Durand** (4), Thaiss (5), Stefani (1), Wisely (2), Flores (9), Estrada (13), Conforto (8), Soler (10). **HR**—Schanebl (3), off Braves; Soler (8), off Strickland; Slater (1), off Fulmer. **RBIs**—Pillar (25), Schanebl (23), Neto (29), Adell (32), Stefani (2 (4), Estrada (2 (35), Wisely (3 (22), Chapman (30), Soler (4 (22), Slater (2 (6), Brooks (1). **SF**—Neto. **Runners left in SP**—Angels 4, San Francisco 4. **RISP**—Angels 3 for 10; San Francisco 9 for 19.

Angels	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Joyce	2	1	0	0	1	3	42	7.94
Suarez, L, 1-2	1	5	5	1	0	4	34	8.15
Strickland	7	4	4	3	0	1	25	7.5
Marble	2	0	0	0	1	1	27	0.00
Fulmer	1	6	4	4	1	0	28	4.40
Guillorme	1	0	0	0	0	0	6	0.00

San Francisco	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Millers	1	2	1	0	0	0	15	3.58
Biven, W, 1-0	3	1	1	1	0	4	36	3.00
Hjelle	1	0	0	0	0	0	10	2.27
Jackson	1	0	0	0	1	0	10	4.91
Ta Jaegers	1	1	0	0	1	1	24	2.32
Tj Rogers	1	0	0	0	0	0	16	3.38
Doval	4	4	4	2	0	0	29	4.88
Walker	0	0	0	0	0	2	9	4.43

U—Mark Rippenger, Tom Hanahan, Nick Lentz, Lance Barksdale. T—2:48. **Tickets sold**—41,008 (41,915).

SEATTLE 5, TEXAS 0												
Texas	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.	Seattle	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.	
Semien 2b	4	0	0	0	.261	Crawford ss	4	0	0	0	.201	
Seagrass ss	4	0	0	0	.258	Rojas 3b	4	1	1	0	.263	
Garcia rf	3	0	0	0	.216	Rodriguez cf	3	0	0	0	.268	
Low 1b	3	0	1	0	.259	Raleigh c	3	0	0	0	.206	
Langford lf	3	0	0	0	.240	Haniger dh	3	1	1	0	.225	
Jankewski dh	3	0	0	0	.228	1-Bless dh	3	0	0	0	.167	
Duran 3b	3	0	0	0	.258	Raley lf	3	1	1	0	.254	
Taveras cf	3	0	0	0	.211	Cannon cf	3	0	1	0	.211	
Knitzer c	3	0	1	0	.138	Locklear 1b	4	1	1	0	.222	
Totals	29	0	2	0		Totals	30	5	6	3		
Texas						000	000	000	0	2	0	
Seattle						000	110	12x	5	6	0	

1-run for Haniger in the 8th.

Walks—Seattle 4; Rodriguez 1, Raleigh 1, Raley 1, Canzone 1. **Strikeouts**—Texas 9; Semien 2, Seagr 1, Garcia 1, Jankewski 1, Duran 2, Taveras 2, Seattle 12; Crawford 2, Rodriguez 1, Haniger 1, Raley 1, Canzone 2, Langford 2, Moore 3. **LOB**—Texas 2, Seattle 6. **2B**—Low (6), Haniger (10), Raley (7), Rojas (10). **HR**—Locklear (2), off Leclerc; RBIs—Raley (19), Locklear (9), Canzone (12), **SB**—Bliss (4). **Runners left in scoring position**—Seattle 1 (Langford); Seattle 3 (Haniger, Locklear 2). **RISP**—Texas 0 for 1; Texas 2 for 5.

Texas	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Dunning, L, 4-6.....	4	2	2	3	8	98	4.73	
Latz.....	1	0	0	0	2	18	2.70	
Leclerc.....	1	1	1	1	1	12	4.55	
Winn.....	1	1	2	2	1	22	7.63	
Seattle	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Gilbert, W, 4-4.....	8	2	0	0	0	9	101	2.93
Voth.....	1	0	0	0	0	15	3.07	

Inherited runners scored—Latz 1, HBP—Winn (Haniger). **WP**—Dunning, Winn. **U**—Brian Walsh, Edwin Moscoso, Jay Carapazza, Adam Haney. T—2:18. **Tickets sold**—45,584 (47,929).

MINNESOTA 6, OAKLAND 2												
Oakland	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.	Minnesota	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.	
Toro 2b	5	0	1	0	.261	Margot lf	4	1	0	0	.224	
Bleday cf	4	0	2	0	.243	Correa ss	5	2	3	0	.306	
Rooker dh	3	0	0	0	.253	Lewis dh	4	1	2	1	.395	
Andujar lf	4	0	1	0	.312	Reynolds 3b	4	0	2	0	.278	
Sandoz 1b	4	0	1	0	.225	Buxton cf	4	1	1	0	.244	
Davis 3b	3	1	2	0	.236	Jeffers c	4	0	0	0	.233	
Cameron rf	3	1	1	0	.195	Castro lf	3	0	0	0	.254	
McCann c	4	0	1	0	.278	Santana 1b	3	1	2	0	.233	
Schuenn ss	4	0	0	0	.235	Farmar 2b	4	0	0	0	.196	
Totals	34	2	9	2		Totals	34	6	12	6		
Oakland	300	000	101	-2	9	0						
Minnesota	300	100	20x	-6	12	0						

Walks—Oakland 3; Rooker 1, Davis 1, Cameron 1, Minnesota 5; Margot 1, Lewis 2, Castro 1, Santana 1, Farmar 1. **Strikeouts**—Oakland 10; Bleday 1, Rooker 2, Cameron 2, Schuenn 3, Minnesota 3; Margot 1, Correa 1, Buxton 1. **LOB**—Oakland 8, Minnesota 9. **2B**—Bleday (19). **HR**—Cameron (2), off Otero; Correa 2 (8), off Sears; Lewis (6), off Sears; Santana (1), off Basso. **RBIs**—Cameron (5), McCann (9), Correa 3 (34), Lewis (9), Santana 2 (36). **SB**—Santana (2), Buxton (4). **CS**—Farmer (4). **Runners left in scoring position**—Oakland 3 (Toro, Rooker, Andujar); Minnesota 5 (Farmer 2, Margot 2, Buxton). **RISP**—Oakland 1 for 7; Minnesota 1 for 7. **Runners moved up**—Rooker, Castro. **GDP**—Soderstrom, Miranda. **DP**—Oakland 1 (Sears, Toro, Soderstrom); Minnesota 1 (Correa, Santana).

2. Margot 2-Roster). **RISP**—Oakland 1 for 7; Minnesota 1 for 7. **Runners moved up**—Buxton, St. Louis. **GD**—Soderstrom, Miranda. **DP**—Oakland 1 (Davis, Torro, Soderstrom); Minnesota 1 (Correa, Santana).

Oakland	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Sears, L, 4-6	4	5	4	4	1	95	4.25	
Nittoli	1	0	0	0	1	18	1.80	
Basso	2	3	2	2	0	29	5.40	
Minnesota	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Ober, W, 6-4	6	6	1	2	8	96	4.81	
Alcala, H, 5	1	0	0	0	1	12	2.90	
Sands	2	1	1	1	1	27	4.41	
Duran, S, 11-11	0	0	0	0	0	9	3.60	

Inherited runners scored—Nittoli 1-0, Duran 2-0. U—Quinn Wolcott.

Inherited runners scored—Nittoli 1-0, Duran 2-0. **U**—Quinn Wolcott, Emil Jimenez, Ramon De Jesus, Adrian Johnson. T—2:43. **Tickets sold**—33,

Injuries will affect Dodgers in many ways

[**Dodgers**, from B10] woebe gone weekend, whether their championship hopes took any dash when Yamamoto felt tightness in his throwing arm or Betts got plunked with a pitch in his left hand — that, only time will tell.

As they returned to the field Monday, sans two of their brightest star players, here are four ways the club could be affected.

Lineup shuffle

The simplest short-term change for the Dodgers to make is in their batting order.

With Betts, their leadoff hitter, sidelined, the Dodgers can slide their other star bats up a spot in the lineup, with Ohtani serving as the temporary leadoff hitter, followed by Freddie Freeman, Will Smith and Teoscar Hernández.

The top of the order will still be a threat.

Defensively, though, the ramifications could be more complex.

Roberts said sure-handed veteran infielder Miguel Rojas will primarily take over at shortstop for now. However, the 35-year-old has already dealt with leg soreness in a part-time capacity (Rojas has started only 30 of 73 games, even with a .278 batting average) and probably will need to be spelled regularly by others, such as utilityman Kiké Hernández.

That should give the Dodgers enough cover at shortstop, where Betts' defense had graded poorly, by major league standards, in his first year playing the position full-time since high school.

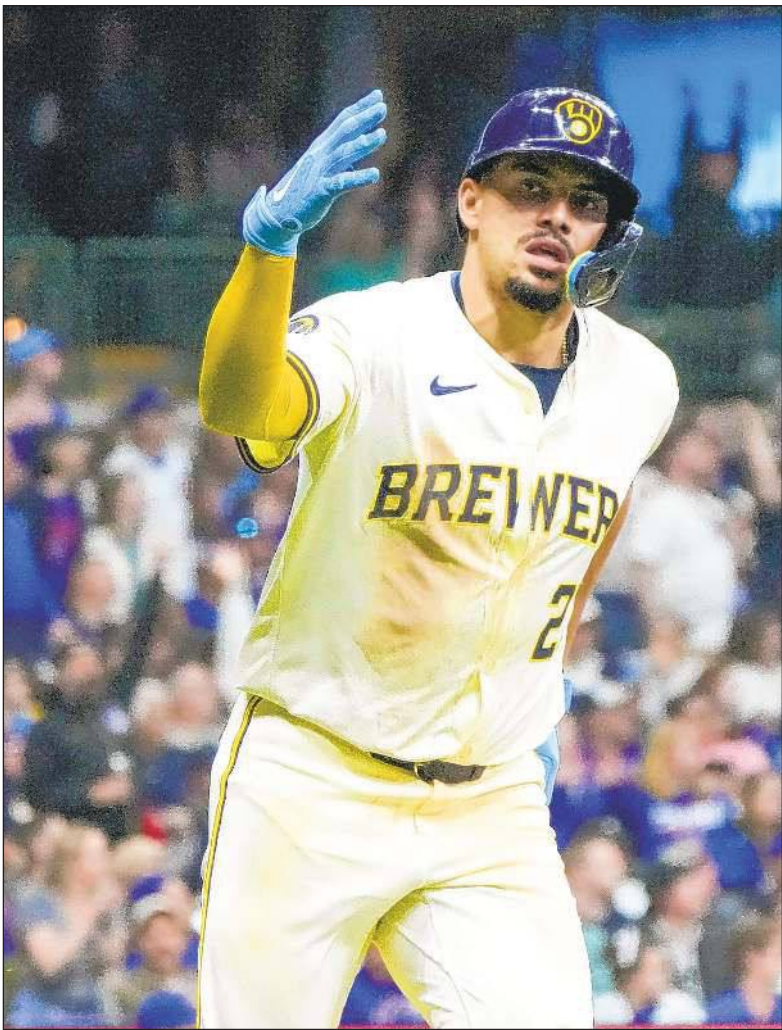
But it will also eat into the Dodgers' versatility in the field — forcing a team that once had myriad ways to deploy its roster (for example, platooning Rojas at second base with Gavin Lux) to work harder to make the pieces fit.

Rotation recalibration

Since the week the Dodgers acquired Glasnow and Yamamoto this offseason, it was clear those two would be the anchors in their rotation.

Glasnow and Yamamoto were not only the highest-paid pitchers on the team, costing the Dodgers more than half a billion to add this offseason, but they were also the most established — Glasnow (who is 7-5 with a 3.00 ERA) as a supremely talented, albeit injury-plagued, MLB veteran; Yamamoto (6-2, 2.92 ERA) as one of the most decorated pitchers in Japan's Nippon Professional Baseball league.

From the start, they were tagged as co-aces. Now, with Yamamoto's



WILLY ADAMES is a player the Dodgers have targeted, but it's unlikely the first-place Brewers would be interested in trading him.

timeline to return (or ability to perform once he does) unclear, half of that responsibility will have to be shouldered somewhere else.

Internally, the best candidates might be the Dodgers' youngest ones.

Gavin Stone is having a breakout season, currently 10th in the NL with a 3.01 ERA. Bobby Miller had similar success last season, with a 3.76 ERA, and is set to return from a shoulder injury Wednesday.

Both have the stuff to keep taking steps forward. And now, their importance to the team stands to grow.

The Dodgers also have more well-known veterans, including James Paxton (6-1, 3.92 ERA), Walker Buehler (1-4, 4.64 ERA) and Clayton Kershaw (who will soon begin a rehabilitation assignment after shoulder surgery this offseason).

That group, however, is more fraught with questions.

Paxton's command has been frustratingly inconsistent, with 32 walks in less than 60 innings. Buehler has struggled in his return from a second Tommy John surgery, giving up fewer than three runs only once. Kershaw is coming back from his first career surgery at age 36.

With time, maybe one of them will round into form. Perhaps someone else (such as Dustin May, who is also working his way back from surgery) will emerge as a

surprise weapon.

In the meantime, though, the Dodgers' list of legitimate No. 2 starters in Yamamoto's absence is somewhat thin, beginning (and maybe also ending) with the two youngest members of their rotation.

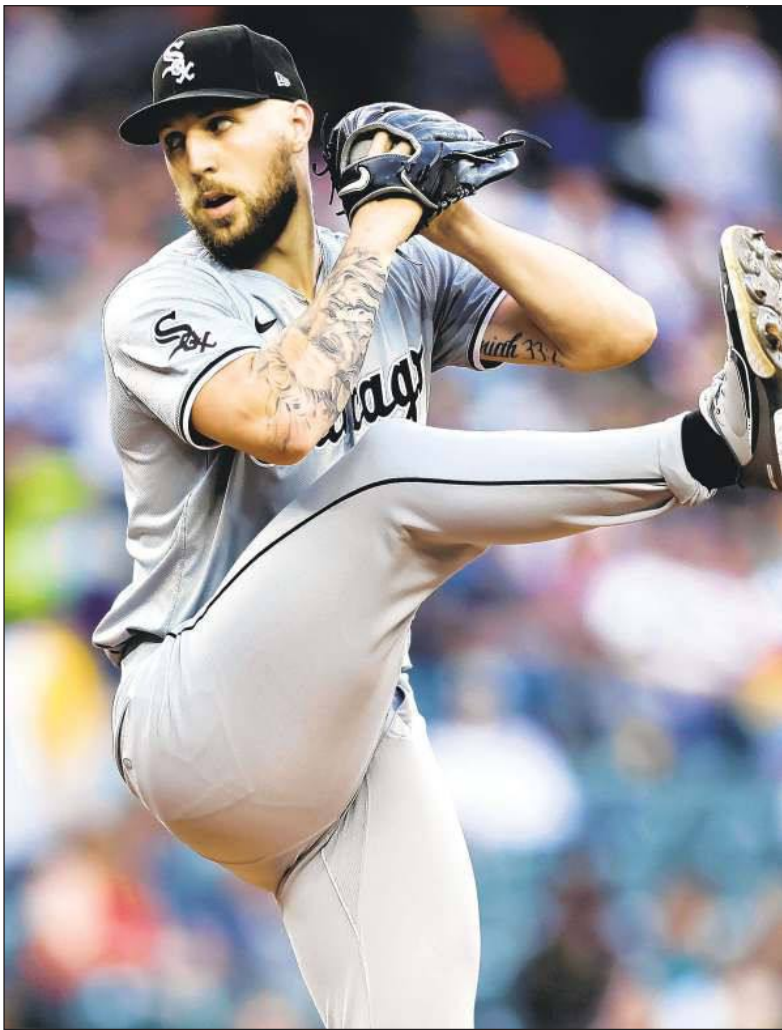
Deadline pitching help

The other option, of course, is for the Dodgers to canvas the trade market before the July 30 deadline, and seek an external target to bolster their pitching staff.

The team's willingness to do so could depend on the severity of Yamamoto's injury — and the front office's confidence the 25-year-old will make a full recovery over the next couple of months (it will be at least a few weeks before Yamamoto even starts throwing again, Roberts said).

If the Dodgers do need to make a pitching splash, however, there are few obvious players for them to target.

Some of the most talented potential trade targets this deadline — such as Garrett Crochet of the Chicago White Sox (the AL strikeout leader) or Jesús Luzardo of the Miami Marlins (who had a combined 3.48 ERA in 2022 and 2023) — have multiple years of club control left and will demand lofty returns to



GARRETT CROCHET, who leads the AL in strikeouts, would be a quality addition to the Dodgers' staff, but the price would be high.

acquire.

Among lower-cost arms likely to move this deadline — a group including Tyler Anderson of the Angels, Luis Severino of the New York Mets and Jack Flaherty of the Detroit Tigers, among others — few are certain to be legitimate upgrades over Stone, Miller, Buehler and company.

This was a risk the Dodgers took when they bypassed any other major pitching acquisitions this offseason.

Corbin Burnes and Dylan Cease long seemed like fits for L.A. but were ultimately dealt elsewhere earlier this year.

The team showed free-agent interest in Aaron Nola early in the winter, and Blake Snell late in the spring, according to people with knowledge of those discussions unauthorized to speak publicly, but landed neither.

Now, acquiring another impact arm could pose a tall task — no matter how much the Dodgers might suddenly need to look.

Long-term infield alignment

Betts' injury also raises questions about the Dodgers' long-term infield plans — even when he eventually returns to health.

While the Dodgers had remained bullish on Betts' defensive capabilities, banking on him to make contin-

ued improvement as a shortstop in the coming months, he was no lock to be their everyday starter at the position come the stretch run of the season.

Now, that prospect appears even slimmer.

Betts is about to miss out on weeks, if not months, of valuable shortstop repetitions — both in games and during pregame infield drills.

Without that, it's unclear if the club will continue its experiment with him at shortstop, or move him back to either second base (where he was originally planning to play this season) or right field (where he is a six-time Gold Glover, but has not played at all this season) upon his return.

If Betts does move else-

where, upgrading the shortstop position poses another challenge.

A combination of Rojas and Hernández might be an adequate short-term solution, but is not the most appealing duo for an extended postseason run.

Just like the pitching market, few top shortstops figure to be traded before the deadline, either — including Willy Adames of the Milwaukee Brewers, another player the Dodgers previously targeted.

It's just one more repercussion from the Dodgers' injury-ravaged weekend — a turning-point moment that could define their path to championship contention and alter the blueprint of their World Series ambitions.

PRO CALENDAR

	TUE 18	WED 19	THU 20	FRI 21	SAT 22
 DODGERS	at Colorado 5:30 SNLA	at Colorado 5:30 SNLA	at Colorado Noon SNLA	ANGELS 7 SNLA	ANGELS 7 SNLA
 ANGELS	MILWAUKEE 6:30 BSW	MILWAUKEE 6:30 BSW		at Dodgers 7 BSW	at Dodgers 7 BSW
 SPARKS	at Connecticut 4 NBA TV		at New York 4 Amazon Prime		at New York Noon ESPN
 GALAXY		NEW YORK 7:30 Apple TV			at Salt Lake 6:30 Apple TV+
 LAFC		at Austin 5:30 Apple TV			SAN JOSÉ 7:30 Apple TV+
 ANGEL CITY		LOUISVILLE 7 BSW			at Bay FC 7 ION

Shade denotes home game.

TODAY ON THE AIR

TIME	EVENT	ON THE AIR
BASEBALL		
4 p.m.	Baltimore at New York Yankees	TV: TBS
5:30 p.m.	Dodgers at Colorado	TV: SNLA R: 570, 1020
6:30 p.m.	Milwaukee at Angels	TV: BSW R: 830, 1220
6:30 p.m.	Kansas City at Oakland	TV: MLB, ESPN+
BASKETBALL: WNBA		
4 p.m.	Sparks at Connecticut	TV: NBA
7 p.m.	New York at Phoenix	TV: CBSSN
BOWLING		
4 p.m.	PWBA, U.S. Women's Open	TV: CBSSN
COLLEGE BASEBALL		
11 a.m.	College World Series, Florida State vs. North Carolina	TV: ESPN
4 p.m.	College World Series, Florida vs. TBD	TV: ESPN
DIVING		
8 a.m.	U.S. Olympic trials, preliminaries	TV: Peacock
3 p.m.	U.S. Olympic trials, preliminaries (delay)	TV: USA
4:15 p.m.	U.S. Olympic trials, finals	TV: USA, Peacock
9:30 p.m.	U.S. Olympic trials, finals (delay)	TV: 4
HOCKEY: NHL		
5 p.m.	Stanley Cup Final, Game 5, Edmonton at Florida	TV: 7, ESPN+, ESPND
SOCCER		
Noon	UEFA Euro, group play, Portugal vs. Czech Republic	TV: 11
6 a.m. (Wed.)	UEFA Euro, group play, Croatia vs. Albania	TV: FS1
SWIMMING		
7:45 a.m.	U.S. Olympic trials, qualifying heats	TV: Peacock
3 p.m.	U.S. Olympic trials, qualifying heats	TV: USA
8 p.m.	U.S. Olympics trials, finals and semifinals (delay)	TV: 4
TENNIS		
6 a.m.	London, Halle (ATP); Berlin, Birmingham (WTA) early rounds	TV: Tennis
2 a.m. (Wed.)	London, Halle (ATP); Berlin, Birmingham (WTA) early rounds	TV: Tennis



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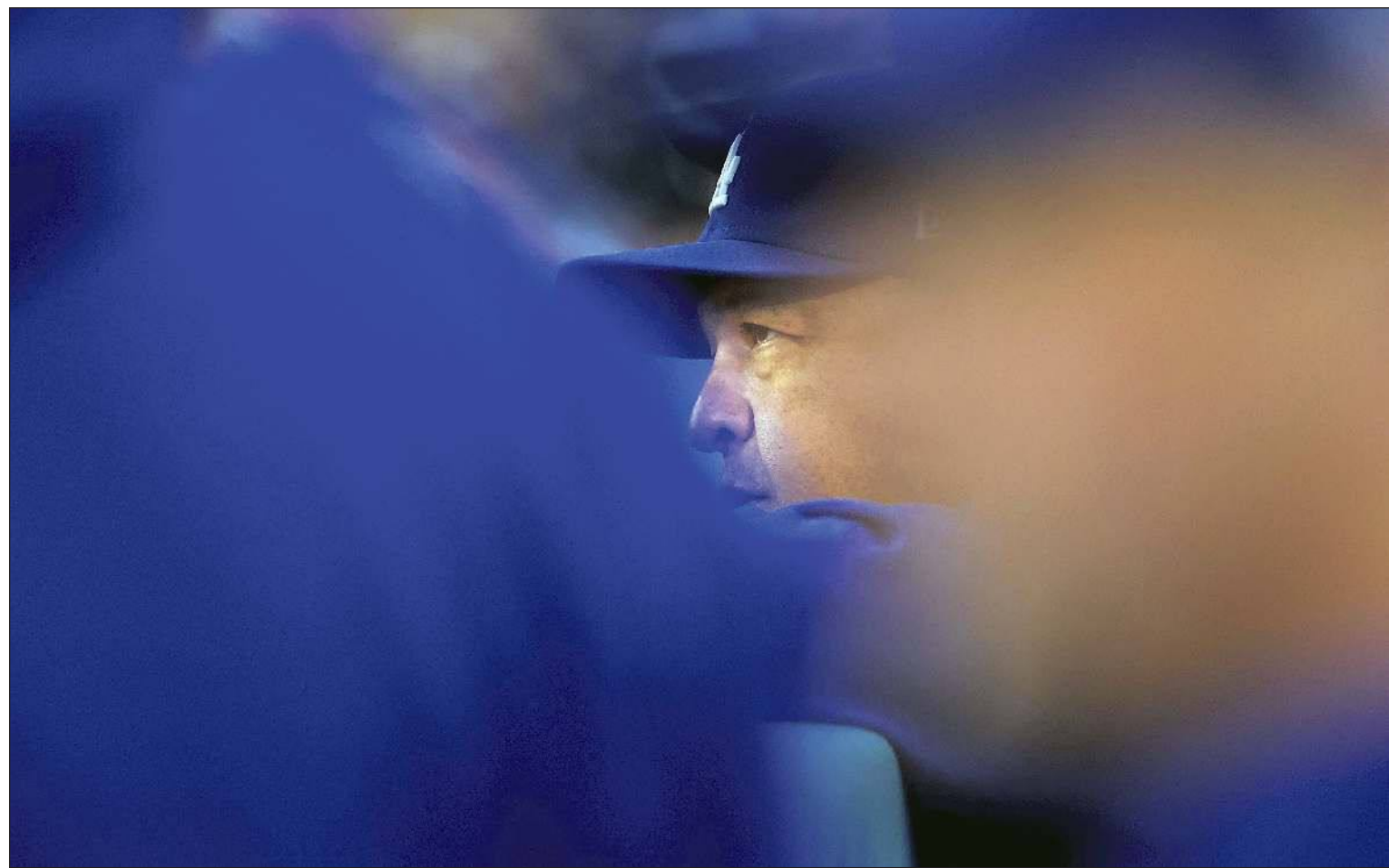
From great pain will come change



MIGUEL ROJAS will be the primary shortstop after the injury to Mookie Betts, but he has been dealing with leg soreness.



MOOKIE BETTS broke his hand Sunday and it's unclear when he returns whether he will remain the starting shortstop.



DAVE ROBERTS insists the team will be fine in the wake of key injuries, citing the talented roster the Dodgers have put together.



GAVIN STONE is having a breakout season and will be counted on to continue that as the team navigates depth issues.



YOSHINOBU YAMAMOTO won't begin throwing again for at least a few weeks after sustaining a rotator-cuff strain.

Loss of Betts, Yamamoto will alter the Dodgers' path toward postseason on a number of fronts.

JACK HARRIS
ON DODGERS

DENVER — Amid the doom of dire injury updates, and gloom of two star players being sidelined the foreseeable future, Dodgers manager Dave Roberts dropped in a dash of optimism Sunday afternoon.

"We'll be fine," Roberts insisted, even as he announced Mookie Betts had a fractured hand and Yoshinobu Yamamoto had a strained rotator cuff. "We have really good players."

That much is true. Even with Betts and Yamamoto sidelined for the foreseeable future, the Dodgers have a likely MVP candidate (Shohei Ohtani), a possible Cy Young contender (Tyler Glasnow) and a handful of other potential All-Stars.

They have an eight-game division lead in the National League West, and the depth to preserve it over the second half of the season.

Long-term, the Dodgers are still counting on Betts and Yamamoto to be back by the playoffs, hopeful neither player's injury will require surgery or be season-ending.

But whether the club can be as good as it was before this [See **Dodgers**, B9]

Trade options limited for Dodgers

DYLAN HERNÁNDEZ

They were both learning to do something they'd never done before, Mookie Betts playing shortstop full time and Yoshinobu Yamamoto pitching in the major leagues.

Their respective educations were suddenly paused on Sunday.

Betts broke his left hand when he was struck by a 98-mph fastball during the Dodgers' 3-0 victory over the Kansas City Royals. Yamamoto was placed on the injured list with a strained rotator cuff.

Manager Dave Roberts said he expected the two players to return this season, but what he neglected to mention was how unlikely they were to come back as the players the Dodgers were hoping they would be.

How can the Dodgers count on Betts to play shortstop at a [See **Hernández**, B9]



Rogers' legacy as a gay man extends well beyond soccer

Pioneering ex-Galaxy star has a family and found success in the entertainment field.

KEVIN BAXTER
ON SOCCER

Robbie Rogers was back at Dignity Health Sports Park on Saturday. It wasn't his first visit since playing his final game for the Galaxy eight years ago; his two young children, Caleb and Mia, love coming to the games, he said.

Yet it was the first time he came to the stadium to

receive a bobblehead in his likeness, sit in the president's suite and celebrate Pride Month by taking part in a national television broadcast on Apple TV.

"We know how special a player he was and how much he meant to our organization," Galaxy president Tom Braun said.

In 2013, Rogers became the first openly gay male to play a game in a major U.S. professional sports league. It was a historic moment, one that seemed a harbinger of things to come. A month earlier Jason Collins, an NBA free agent, came out as gay in a Sports Illustrated interview. Less than

three months later Michael Sam, a standout defensive lineman at the University of Missouri, came out to his teammates. He would soon become the first openly gay player selected in the NFL draft.

Then, nothing.

In 2018, Minnesota United midfielder Collin Martin came out, but he would play fewer than a dozen games in MLS after that. In 2021, the Raiders' Carl Nassib announced on Instagram that he was gay. He played two seasons with the Raiders and Tampa Bay Buccaneers, then quietly retired.

[See **Rogers**, B6]



THE GALAXY'S Robbie Rogers, left, is stopped by Real Salt Lake defender Justen Glad in a 2016 game. Three years earlier, Roberts had come out.

Dodgers' City Connect uniforms a hit
Unlike the first iteration, the new star-themed version better ties the team to the community. **B8**

A surprise run for U.S. cricketers
Team has become the darling of the sport as it prepares for the World Cup's Super Eight stage. **B7**

Angels, Anaheim in a stalemate
City has owed Arte Moreno \$5 million for two years, but the failed stadium deal complicates things. **B7**



MICHAEL DWYER Associated Press

BOSTON'S Jayson Tatum lets out a yell after scoring in the first half of the Celtics' 106-88 title-clinching win over the Dallas Mavericks in Game 5 of the NBA Finals.

It's another banner night in Beantown

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BOSTON — The Boston Celtics again stand alone among NBA champions.

Jayson Tatum had 31 points, 11 assists and eight rebounds as the Celtics topped the Dallas Mavericks 106-88 on Monday night to win the franchise's 18th championship, breaking a tie with the Lakers for the most in league history.

Boston earned its latest title on the 16th anniversary of hoisting its last Larry O'Brien Trophy in 2008. It marks the 13th championship won this century by one of the city's Big Four professional sports franchises.

Jaylen Brown added 21 points and was voted the NBA Finals MVP. Jrue Holiday finished with 15 points and 11 rebounds. Center Kristaps Porzingis also provided

an emotional lift, returning from a two-game absence because of a dislocated tendon in his left ankle to chip in five points in 17 minutes.

It helped the Celtics cap a postseason that saw them go 16-3 and finish with an 80-21 overall record. That .792 winning percentage ranks second in team history behind only the Celtics' 1985-86 championship team that finished 82-18 (.820).

Second-year coach Joe Mazzulla, at age 35, also became the youngest coach since Bill Russell in 1969 to lead a team to a title.

Luka Doncic finished with 28 points and 12 rebounds for Dallas, which failed to extend the series after avoiding a sweep with a 38-point win in Game 4. The Mavericks had been 3-0 in Game 5s this postseason, with Doncic scoring at least 31 points in each of them.

Kyrie Irving finished with just 15

points on five-of-16 shooting and has now lost 13 of the last 14 meetings against the Celtics team he left in the summer of 2019 to join the Brooklyn Nets.

NBA teams are now 0-157 in postseason series after falling into a 3-0 deficit.

Boston never trailed and led by as many as 26 feeding off the energy of the TD Garden crowd.

Dallas was within 16-15 early before the Celtics closed the first quarter on a 12-3 run that included eight combined points by Tatum and Brown.

The Celtics did it again in the second quarter when the Mavericks trimmed what had been a 15-point deficit to nine. Boston ended the period with a 19-7 spurt that was capped by a half-court buzzer beater by Payton Pritchard — his second such shot of the series — to give Boston a 67-46 halftime lead.

Over the last two minutes of the first and second quarters, the Celtics outscored the Mavericks 22-4.

The Celtics never looked back.

Russell's widow, Jeannine Russell, and his daughter Karen Russell were in TD Garden to salute the newest generation of Celtics champions.

They watched current Celtics stars Tatum and Brown earn their first rings. It was the trade that sent 2008 champions Kevin Garnett and Paul Pierce to Brooklyn in 2013 that netted Boston the draft picks it eventually used to select Brown and Tatum third overall in back-to-back drafts in 2016 and 2017.

The All-Stars came into their own this season, leading a Celtics team that built around taking and making a high number of three-pointers, and a defense that rated as the league's best during the

regular season.

The duo made it to at least the Eastern Conference finals as teammates four previous times.

Their fifth deep playoff run together proved to be the charm.

After both struggling at times offensively in the series, Tatum and Brown hit a groove in Game 5, combining for 31 points and 11 assists in the first half.

It helped bring out all the attributes that made Boston the NBA's most formidable team this postseason — spreading teams out, sharing the ball and causing havoc on defense.

And it put a championship bow on a dizzying two-year stretch for the Celtics that saw them lose in the finals to the Golden State Warriors in 2022 and then fail to return last season after a Game 7 home loss to the Miami Heat in the conference finals.

In first game without Betts, Ohtani, Rojas shine to beat Rockies

STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

No Mookie, no problem.

For one night at least.

In the Dodgers' first game without star shortstop Mookie Betts, who is expected to sit out roughly six to eight weeks because of a fractured hand he sustained Sunday, the team cruised to a 9-5 win over the Colorado Rockies at Coors Field in Denver.

In a reminder of the talent on the Dodgers' roster, they received key contributions from the two players taking over Betts' primary responsibilities.

Without Betts at the top of the lineup, designated hitter Shohei Ohtani was bumped up to the lead-off spot and went three for four with an RBI and a walk.

Without Betts at shortstop, Miguel Rojas slid back over to his natural position and christened the return with a three-hit, two-run, one-RBI outburst, continuing an impressively productive start to the season the Dodgers will need to last for the foreseeable future.

The Dodgers received plenty of help from others Monday, including a seven-inning, one-run, two-hit start by James Paxton (one of the pitchers who will have to step up in the absence of Yoshinobu Yamamoto, who also suffered a significant, but non-season-ending

injury this weekend), three hits from Jason Heyward and a career-high five walks from Freddie Freeman.

But, in the big picture, it was the play of Ohtani and Rojas that was most encouraging to a club still reeling from Betts' injury.

Ohtani's performance served as an encore to Sunday, when he emerged from an 11-for-51 slump with two home runs. The star slugger didn't leave the yard again Monday, but he did single home a run in the second, before hitting back-to-back doubles in the fourth and sixth innings.

He now has a .314 batting average and .989 OPS, ranking fourth and second in the National League, respectively.

For the time being, Ohtani will also serve as the Dodgers' leadoff hitter, moving up from a No. 2 spot that on Monday belonged to catcher Will Smith, the former cleanup hitter. Freeman remained in the No. 3 spot, and Teoscar Hernández batted fourth.

Is this the new look Roberts will use at the top of the lineup?

"I think versus the right-hander, I like this," Roberts said, not entirely tipping his hand. "Against left, I will probably think through it. But this feels right, versus both right now."

Roberts said Rojas will start the majority of the games at shortstop,



DAVID ZALUBOWSKI Associated Press

JASON HEYWARD slides safely to score a run on a double by Miguel Rojas in the seventh inning of a 9-5 victory. Rojas had three hits in his first game at shortstop to replace injured Mookie Betts.

with Kiké Hernández backing him up in addition to his other roles at third base and the outfield.

Rojas has been a pleasant surprise at the plate, raising his batting average to .292 and OPS to .799 with two singles and an RBI double in the seventh inning Monday.

In games Rojas has recorded at least one hit this season, the Dodgers are 20-0.

Because of all the time they've spent together this season, Rojas said he was sad and angry when he saw Betts writhing on the ground in pain Sunday, after being plunked by a 98-mph fastball.

In his first chance to step up in Betts' place, though, Rojas deliv-

ered, helping ensure the Dodgers' first game without their former MVP winner wasn't one in which his presence was dearly missed.

— JACK HARRIS

ANGELS

Plesac steps in late to knock off Brewers

Zach Plesac pitched six innings of four-hit ball in his Angels debut and his first major league start in nearly 14 months, and Zach Neto hit a two-run homer in a 5-3 victory over the Milwaukee Brewers on

Monday night at Angel Stadium.

Luis Guillorme had an RBI triple during the Angels' three-run third, which was aided by two Brewers defensive misplays.

Nolan Schanuel had two hits and drove in a run as the Angels hung on for their fourth win in six games.

Carlos Estévez pitched the ninth for his 13th save.

Plesac (1-0) was recalled from triple-A Salt Lake earlier Monday to replace José Suarez on the Angels' roster, and he got assigned to start about two hours before first pitch when José Soriano was scratched because of lower abdominal pain.



Los Angeles Times

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Academy Museum of Motion Pictures

“EDWARD II,” with Jody Graber, left, and Tilda Swinton, is among the films screening in the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures’ new series “Full of Pleasure.”

Shedding light on policing in Belfast

Creators of BBC’s ‘Blue Lights’ on the ‘massive’ duty to get their cop show right.

By MEREDITH BLAKE

NEW YORK — When Declan Lawn and Adam Patterson were first approached about making a cop show set in Belfast, they were — to put it mildly — apprehensive.

Both writers grew up in Northern Ireland, live in Belfast and are deeply familiar with the bloody history of the region. Yet they worried that a series about the city’s police force, which was once overwhelmingly Protestant and viewed with suspicion by the Catholic community, would be too inherently polarizing.

Even today, more than 25 years after the Good Friday Agreement, which brought peace to the country after decades of conflict, “There are some areas where the police can’t go,” Patterson said during a recent visit to New York. “The biggest fear was that the politics of it all would just swallow up anything that we would try to say and become the story. That’s often the case in Northern Ireland.”

“It’s a big privilege to tell a story about your own place, your own time, in your own voice,” added Lawn. “But it’s also a massive — I would say, at times oppressive — responsibility.”

But the duo, former broadcast journalists who worked together on the BBC current affairs series “Panorama,” reconsidered after meeting with Belfast police officers. “These are just ordinary people, and they’re doing what they can,” said Lawn. [See ‘Blue Lights,’ E2]

Put on your dancing shoes

“Disco: Soundtrack of a Revolution” revisits the era and considers its ties to liberation movements. E2

Comics E4-5
Puzzles E5

A pivotal point in queer representation

B. Ruby Rich looks back at ’90s flowering of gay and lesbian cinema, focus of Academy Museum series

By MANUEL BETANCOURT

The start of the 1990s saw an explosion of gay and lesbian films that defied convention. They mixed postmodern sensibilities with contemporary anxieties about everything from the AIDS epidemic to rampant homophobia. Furthermore, they refracted those concerns through a visual language that borrowed gleefully from the avant-garde and video art yet proved surprisingly marketable.

These were movies that were hard to label and harder still to ignore. To film critic and scholar B. Ruby Rich, that crop of films represented a period in cinema like none that had come before it — and perhaps since.

“It marked a moment when filmmakers — at whatever risk — were willing to make films that would galvanize people’s attention to injustice and death,” Rich, 75, says over Zoom from Paris. “And

that’s why they still have power.”

Famously, Rich called it New Queer Cinema, a term that’s stuck. Those movies are being celebrated in a series at the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures, “Full of Pleasure: The Beginnings of New Queer Cinema.”

The showcase, which kicked off Saturday, is screening titles such as Derek Jarman’s melancholy regal drama “Edward II”; Todd Haynes’ controversial feature debut, “Poison”; and Cheryl Dunye’s groundbreaking “The Watermelon Woman” — films and filmmakers that ushered in a pivotal juncture in independent cinema by and for the LGBTQ community.

Gay directors were producing exciting, innovative work that was taking the festival circuit by storm. United neither by approach nor aesthetics, [See Queer films, E6]

COMMENTARY

Tony Awards honor big swings

‘Stereophonic,’ ‘The Outsiders’ among winners with regional or nonprofit origins.

CHARLES McNULTY
THEATER CRITIC

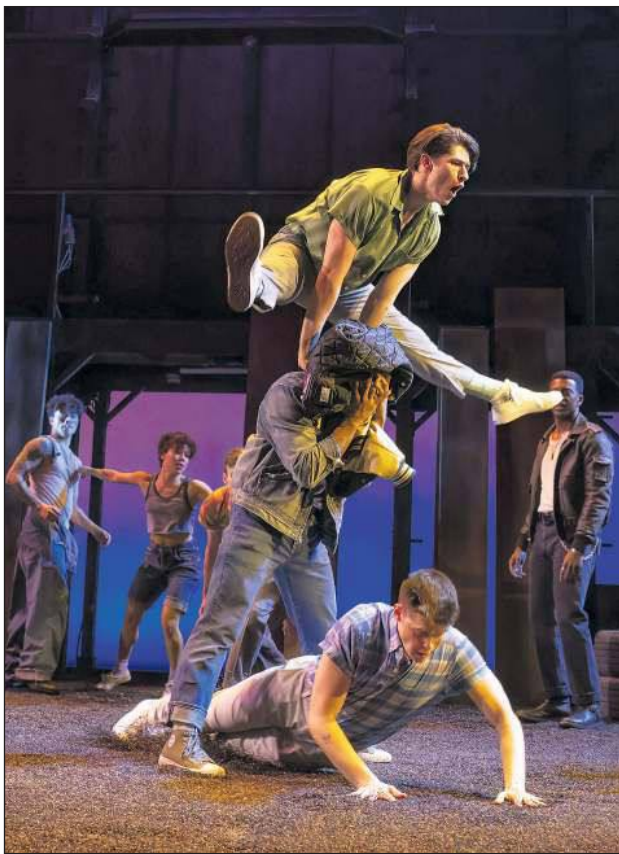
Now that the Tony Awards have been doled out for the 2023-24 Broadway season, what can we conclude about a theatrical year that alternated between drought and flood?

One obvious point is that if you’re looking to develop a winner, an off-Broadway or regional theater is the way to go. For all their economic travails, nonprofit companies simply do it better.

“Stereophonic,” which won for best play, began at

Playwrights Horizons. “The Outsiders,” which won for best musical in a dark-horse victory, had its world premiere at the La Jolla Playhouse. “Merrily We Roll Along,” which won for musical revival, transferred from New York Theatre Workshop. And “Appropriate,” which won for play revival, was launched at Broadway’s Helen Hayes Theater by Second Stage, a nonprofit with a rich off-Broadway history.

This trend ought to inspire companies across the nation, reminding them that they too can incubate work of the highest level for our most prominent stages. It also should challenge artistic directors to think less earnestly and more imaginatively, to prioritize ambitiously. [See Tonys, E3]



MATTHEW MURPHY

“THE OUTSIDERS,” a musical adaptation of S.E. Hinton’s young-adult classic, won for best musical.

BOILING POINT



JESSE GRANT Getty Images for the Environmental Media Assn.

HILLARY Clinton seeks shift in Hollywood tales.

For TV, films, a climate change

Hillary Clinton urging studios to incorporate global warming into movie, series plots.

By SAMMY ROTH

Turns out I’m not the only one itching for more movies and television shows dealing with global warming.

Hillary Clinton feels the same way.

The former U.S. secretary of State — who received 2.8 million more votes than Donald Trump in the 2016 presidential election but lost to Trump because of an electoral college system written into the U.S. Constitution in part to persuade slave states to approve the governing document — spoke this month at an Environmental Media Assn. event in West Hollywood.

Clinton talked about one of her family foundation’s latest initiatives, a guide for Hollywood screenwriters and producers looking to include climate themes in their films and shows.

The guide is focused on stories about children, who are especially vulnerable to higher temperatures, bigger fires, stronger storms and other fossil-fueled harms because their brains, lungs and other organs are still developing — and because disruptions to their mental and emotional development can have long-lasting effects.

“Extreme heat has very serious consequences on pregnant women, on infants, on children,” she said. [See Clinton, E3]

TELEVISION REVIEW

‘Disco,’ born of flamboyance and freedom

PBS’ ‘Soundtrack of a Revolution’ ties the music to varied 1970s liberation movements.

ROBERT LLOYD
TELEVISION CRITIC

Disco! The very word hustles you back to the 1970s, the decade in which it was gloriously born in the loft parties and basement clubs of New York, where it blossomed into a national obsession and entered its decadent phase, when Ethel Merman went disco. And if you don’t remember the ’70s, you may recall parties when you dressed up in your parents’ old clothes and danced to their records.

It defined a time, and the three-part documentary “Disco: The Soundtrack of a Revolution,” starting Tuesday on PBS at 9 p.m. Pacific (and already streaming from PBS.org) ties the music not just to its place in the evolution of pop but to the liberation movements of the time, as an expression, originally, of Black, brown and queer subcultures — but also as a genre that gave female singers a different, more assertive, self-confident voice. “I will survive,” went the song, and if all this series does is get you to listen to Gloria Gaynor again



TOM HAYWARD BBC Studios

NICKY SIANO, an influential DJ, weighs in on the era in PBS series “Disco.”

or for the first time, it’ll have been worth it.

Though mass success is exciting, obviously, and empowering to the artist, stories of music history are never more exhilarating than when detailing the creation of a new style, before money is an issue or even a possibility, when it’s the expression of a community rather than the bet of a corporation. “Soundtrack of a Revolution” captures that moment thrillingly, though, as is often the case with such his-

tories, the rise is followed by a fall — the lows are here, along with the highs — and often a rebirth. There’s hardly any creative form that hasn’t been declared dead only to come sneaking or roaring back in some retooled but spiritually similar form. You can’t keep something as joyful and jubilant, as flashy and flamboyant and fundamentally democratic as disco down.

Ironically, in 1977, the year Studio 54 opened its doors to a chosen few, 5,000 discos

opened across the country. “Saturday Night Fever” was released; its soundtrack at one point was selling 200,000 copies a day. In a sense it was the beginning of the end for disco — walled off by exclusion on the one end and melted into the mainstream on the other. The “disco demolitions” that were briefly in the news — public destruction of disco records, most famously causing a riot at Chicago’s Comiskey Park — were as much as anything a matter of straight white

rock fans reacting to the straight white embrace of disco, as hundreds of radio stations converted to the music full-time.

And so, chasing excitement, cutting-edge dance music went underground again, as “Soundtrack of a Revolution” duly notes. Hip-hop as a local New York City phenomenon was well underway when the Sugarhill Gang’s “Rapper’s Delight” broke through in 1979. House music, born in Chicago, brought an electronic foundation to post-disco disco music that has continued, through myriad new subgenres and international offshoots, to inform dance culture to this day.

Not every artist is covered or great song heard. But “Soundtrack” hits all the important points over its three hours, cogently presented and mostly a lot of fun — a mutually illuminating mix of anecdotal reminiscence, musical analysis, historical accounting and political theory.

Along with archival interviews and clips, there are new interviews with singers Candi Staton, Thelma Houston, Anita Ward, Nona Hendryx and Victor Willis, the “cop” from the Village People (the gay ’70s Spice Girls, formed from an ad seeking “Macho Types ... Must Dance and Have a Moustache”); influential

DJs Nicky Siano and François Kevorkian, who helped create a new career path; Philadelphia drummer Earl Young, credited with creating the four-on-the-floor disco beat; critics and clubbers; Robert Williams, whose off-hours nightclub Warehouse gave disco successor house music its name; and a host of activists and scholars to sell the thesis of the title.

It’s probably too much to say, in a cause-and-effect sense, that disco changed politics, or that politics created disco. But every movement has its signature sounds, whether it’s the folk and gospel that accompanied the civil rights movement or the psychedelic music that underscored anti-war protests later in the decade. But the music and the movement(s) advanced hand in hand, even as the wider culture followed at a distance.

And dancing and dance music are almost by definition liberating, going back forever in every place and culture, and as such have been labeled dangerous by agents of the status quo. The sounds and the steps change, and one generation’s inventions may be regarded as quaint by the next — which might be regarded as a kind of progress — but in their time they can shake, and shake up, the world.

Their Northern Irish spin on ‘The Wire’

[‘Blue Lights,’ from E1] ing a crazy job for not very much money,” Patterson said. “We thought we could tell a brilliant story about family, using the police as a Trojan horse.”

This idea evolved into “Blue Lights,” a procedural following a trio of fresh recruits to the Police Service of Northern Ireland, or PSNI: Grace (Siân Brooke), a 40-something shifting from a career as a social worker; Annie (Katherine Devlin), a young rookie whose Catholic background puts her safety at risk; and Tommy (Nathan Branniff), who is insecure but determined to prove himself. They are guided by a team of seasoned vets, including the charming Gerry (Richard Dormer, of “Game of Thrones” fame).

Season 1 revolved around their pursuit of James McIntyre (John Lynch), a former Irish Republican Army man who is now the head of a crime family based in a Catholic, nationalist neighborhood in West Belfast. The series looked at the ties between the paramilitary groups that terrorized Northern Ireland during the Troubles and the present-day drug trade.

In Season 2, which began streaming on BritBox last week, the focus shifts across town to a loyalist pub in Protestant East Belfast that is a hub for criminal activity that transcends the political divide. The ambitious six-



GREG FUNNELL

“BLUE LIGHTS” co-creators Declan Lawn, left, and Adam Patterson.

episode season also explores the city’s heroin epidemic, the impact of government funding cuts and the painful legacy of sectarian violence.

If this makes “Blue Lights” sound like Belfast’s answer to “The Wire,” well, that’s exactly what Patterson and Lawn had in mind when they created the show. David Simon’s acclaimed Baltimore-set drama was a huge inspiration, particularly in its multifaceted depiction of “a postindustrial city that people hadn’t paid much attention to before,” Patterson said.

Like Simon, who got his start as a newspaper reporter, Lawn and Patterson spent years traveling around the world as TV journalists. The experiences “teach you a lot about the human condition, and how people will react to great pressure and difficulty,” Patterson said.

“You would expect that the more bad stuff you see, the more pessimistic view you would have of human nature,” Lawn said. “But our takeaway from all those years was [that] most people are good and decent. The people who aren’t have disproportionate power.”

They met in 2009, while on assignment in Wales, and wound up staying out until 4 a.m. doing karaoke. (Lawn performed “Stan” by Eminem in a packed, working-class bar.) They formed an instant bond that is evident in person 15 years later: The writers share a jocular, brotherly rapport and are quick to call each other out for being boring.

They turned to screenwriting as a way to channel their frustration with the constraints of TV journalism. When they were making documentaries, they would meet remarkable people and interview them for hours — only to leave incredible stories on the cutting room floor.

Their first commission was “The Salisbury Poisonings,” a fact-based BBC miniseries about a botched attempt to assassinate Sergei Skripal, a former Russian military intelligence officer, in 2018.

They tend to take a journalistic approach to crafting drama, conducting numerous interviews and using this primary material to create relatable characters. For “Blue Lights,” they’ve talked



CHRISTOPHER BARR BBC / Two Cities

MARTIN McCann and **Siân Brooke** are police officers in the BBC’s “Blue Lights.”

to dozens of police officers, who shared stories about checking under their cars for bombs and living in fear of fringe republicans.

The history of policing in Belfast is impossible to disentangle from the long conflict between Catholics and Protestants. The Royal Ulster Constabulary, the police force in Northern Ireland until 2001, had almost no Catholics in its ranks and was accused of colluding with unionist paramilitary organizations. It was “horribly divisive,” Patterson said.

The organization was replaced by the PSNI, and there has been a concerted effort to recruit more police officers from Catholic backgrounds. Today, according to the PSNI, about 33% of police officers in the country are Catholic, while 66% are Protestant. (Catholics, once a minority, now narrowly outnumber Protestants in the country as a whole.)

The very existence of “Blue Lights” is a sign of the progress that’s been made. “Ten years ago, you couldn’t have made this show,” Lawn said.

Yet threats remain. Police officers in Northern Ireland regularly carry guns, unlike anywhere else in the United Kingdom.

A few weeks before the premiere of Season 1, a police detective named John Caldwell was shot in an attack believed to have been orchestrated by the New IRA, a dissident republican group, but he survived.

“Sometimes the things that happen in real life, we steer away from because they’re almost too crazy to put on a show,” said Lawn, citing a recent data breach in which the PSNI mistakenly released names and other information about thousands of staffers online, where it was obtained by dissident republicans.

“If we put that in a TV show, people would be like, ‘Come on!’ ” Patterson said.

In Season 2, they delve into the city’s unionist enclaves, leaning on knowledge they gleaned making documentaries about loyalist marching bands. For another storyline involving a char-

acter named Happy (Paddy Jenkins), whose family was killed decades ago in a chip shop bombing, they visited the Wave Trauma Center, which provides support to people affected by the Troubles.

But the new episodes also show how crime has, ironically, brought both sides of the conflict together. “The paramilitary framework is essentially now a sugarcoating for drug gangs. These people do go to church, right? They pretend that they’re fighting for the freedom of Ireland, or the loyalty to the British crown, but they’re gangsters,” Patterson said.

The series has been renewed for a third and fourth season by the BBC (where it airs in the U.K.). In future episodes, they plan to shift to leafy, affluent South Belfast — “where the real criminals are,” Lawn joked.

“We love the city but realize it is a flawed diamond,” Patterson said.

Both in their 40s and part of a generation that came of age at the tail end of the Troubles, Lawn and Patterson bring different perspectives to “Blue Lights.” Patterson comes from a Protestant background, and his father worked in Northern Ireland’s prison system — even doing a stint at the notorious Maze prison, which housed many IRA members. As a kid, he was told to never discuss what his dad did for a living or answer the door to a stranger. They had bullet-resistant glass on the windows.

“It was my normal, but on reflection, it wasn’t normal,” said Patterson, who asked his father for permission to talk about his profession before the release of Season 1. (Lawn said he didn’t even know what Patterson’s father’s did for a living until they started writing “Blue Lights” together.)

Lawn, meanwhile, grew up in a Catholic, nationalist family in Derry (the setting of the raucous Troubles-themed sitcom “Derry Girls”). His parents worked in a bank that was regularly a target of robberies. They lived across the river from the city center and would

often hear bombs going off.

“I became super anxious about them coming home,” he said. “Even if they were five minutes late, I’d be like, ‘Oh, they’re dead,’ which was actually quite a rational expectation. People were being blown up all the time.”

Lawn and Patterson said they had been friends and creative partners for a decade before they really talked about their experiences growing up. Patterson explained the thinking this way: “Somebody else down the road always had something more horrific happen to them. So what right do you have to whine about the things happened to you?”

Yet in writing “Blue Lights,” authenticity is key because “Northern Ireland is a tough audience,” Lawn said. “If you get even the slightest piece of vernacular or accent or anything wrong, they will tell you. So far, we haven’t had any major complaints.”

The series films on location in republican and loyalist neighborhoods where overt displays of support for one side or the other — usually flags and murals — are commonplace.

“The only way you’re going to be able to film there in those places is with the consent of the community. So far, people have been extremely welcoming,” Lawn said. “It might be gritty and difficult, but it’s fair. It doesn’t demonize anyone.”

This realism extends to use of regional slang like “touts” (informants), “peelers” (cops) and “ride” (have sex) and the prevalence of thick Northern Irish accents, which turn long A sounds into short E’s. (Lawn heartily recommends watching with subtitles.)

But the creators of “Blue Lights” believe it resonates beyond the community where it’s set, because themes like family and belonging are universal. It also approaches heavy subject matter with dark humor.

And as unflinching as it is, “Blue Lights” is also an optimistic show, Lawn said. “There’s lots of darkness, lots of grimness. But ultimately, I think it’s about a kind of quiet heroism.”

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MONICA 1332 Second Street Santa Monica	TUESDAY 1:10 4:20 7:20	JUST THE TWO OF US 4:20 PM	INSIDE OUT 2 1:20 4:20 7:20
BAD BEHAVIOUR 1:10 7:00	LONGING 4:10 PM		TREASURE 1:10 4:00 7:10
I USED TO BE FUNNY 1:10 4:20 7:15	EZRA 7:00 PM	QUEENDOM 1:20 4:10 7:10	TUESDAY 1:00 4:10 7:00
RIDE 7:10 PM	LYD 1:00 PM		BAD BOYS RIDE OR DIE 1:10 4:10 7:10
THE GRAB 1:20 4:00 7:20	NEWHALL 22500 Lyons Ave. Santa Clarita	TUESDAY 1:00 4:00 7:00	RUN LOLA RUN 25TH ANNIVERSARY 1:30 4:30
TUESDAY 1:00 4:10 7:10	FIREBRAND 1:00 PM		THE WATCHERS 1:20 4:20
RUN LOLA RUN 25TH ANNIVERSARY 3:00 5:10	INSIDE OUT 2 1:10 4:10 7:10	ULTRAMAN: RISING 1:10 4:10 7:10	CLAREMONT 450 W. 2nd Street Claremont
EZRA 1:30 PM	THE RELENTLESS PATRIOT 4:20 PM		FIREBRAND 1:00 4:00 7:00
FLIPSIDE 4:30 PM	TREASURE 1:00 4:00 7:20	ROBOT DREAMS 1:15 4:00 7:00	INSIDE OUT 2 1:20 4:20 7:20
HIT MAN 4:10 PM	TUESDAY 1:10 4:00 7:10		TREASURE 1:10 4:00 7:10
LYD 1:00 PM	BAD BOYS RIDE OR DIE 1:20 4:20 7:20	LYD 1:00 PM	BAD BOYS RIDE OR DIE 1:10 4:10 7:10
	THE WATCHERS 4:30 PM		THE WATCHERS 4:30 7:30
	THE GARFIELD MOVIE 1:30 4:10 7:30		LYD 1:00 PM
	THE FALL GUY 7:00 PM		

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FOR 6/18/2024 ONLY

Tony takeaway: Taking risks can pay off

[**Tonys**, from E1] tion over safety and to provide a space for artists to discover new possibilities in novel collaborative arrangements.

These Tony winners, announced Sunday night in New York at the David H. Koch Theater at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in a ceremony hosted by Ariana DeBose, stand as models rather than automatic programming choices for the rest of the country. Not that I don't wish to see them in Los Angeles; I sincerely hope they all arrive here. But I'm aware that what made them special may not be readily replicated elsewhere.

Take "Stereophonic," David Adjmi's drama about a 1970s rock band on the cusp of superstardom. The group, which bears a striking resemblance to Fleetwood Mac, is working on a new album as long-simmering creative and romantic tensions explode.

The songs that are being painstakingly perfected in recording studio sessions are by Will Butler of Arcade Fire, and they lend this behind-the-music drama a lyrical spaciousness.

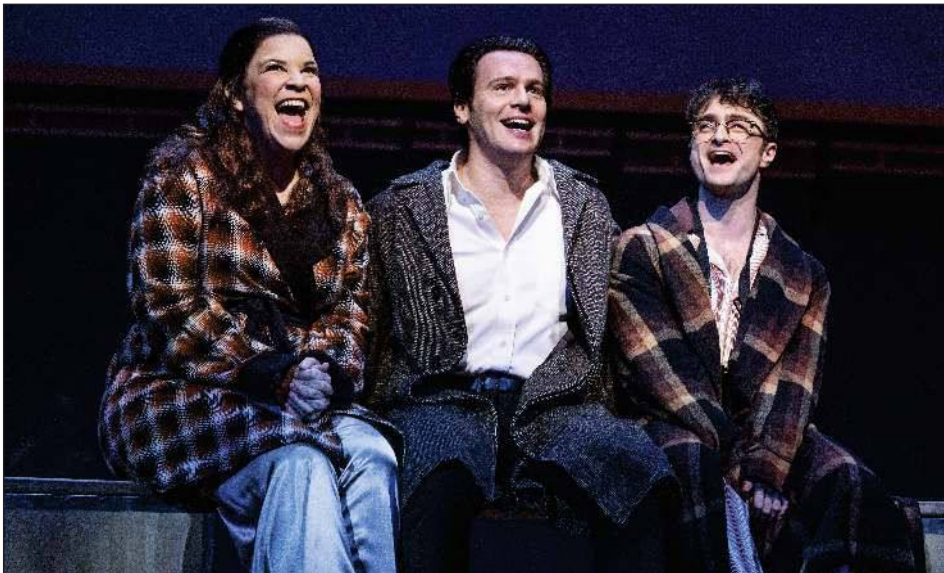
No new work this season has enjoyed such exuberant acclaim. But artistic directors shopping around for prize-winning titles should bear in mind that the Tony for best play honors more than the script. The award acknowledges the production as a whole, and the astounding success of "Stereophonic" is a credit to both the supreme integration of its parts and the breathtaking fearlessness of producers, who refused to accept that an extended off-beat drama by experimental artists couldn't thrive on the commercial shores of Broadway.

The costumes by Enver Chakartash and Tony-winning scenic design by David Zinn capture the scruffy ambience of the '70s rock scene. The ensemble members live their roles in a way that makes it seem as if we're eavesdropping on the quarrels and power struggles of the characters. The staging is meticulously calibrated by Daniel Aukin, an Obie-winning veteran with an avant-gardist's rigor, who richly deserved his Tony for direction. "Stereophonic" isn't just a play — it's an immersive, intricately coordinated theatrical experience.

I can't say that I'm dying to see this more than three-hour drama tried out by a local company with meager resources and limited rehearsal time. Such an outing would no doubt elicit another round of grumbles about the Broadway hype machine. A touring production might be the way to go, but could an economic model be found that would allow the play to travel to venues more appropriate for a play than a clamorous jukebox musical?

While that seemingly insuperable detail gets worked out, I would urge executives at HBO and its streaming rivals to consider optioning Adjmi's drama for a new series, limited or otherwise. And to sign up the original cast, including Will Brill (who won for featured actor in a play), to maintain the same stoned authenticity.

The race for best musical was anyone's guess. Few



MATTHEW MURPHY

LINDSAY Mendez, Jonathan Groff, center, and Daniel Radcliffe in "Merrily We Roll Along," which won for musical revival. The original work bombed in 1981.



VALERIE TERRANOVA

NO NEW WORK this season has enjoyed as much acclaim as "Stereophonic," about a '70s rock band on the cusp of superstardom. It won the Tony for best play.

The 2024 Tony Awards winners

MUSICAL "The Outsiders"	FEATURED ACTOR IN A PLAY Will Brill, "Stereophonic"	Tom Scutt, "Cabaret at the Kit Kat Club"
PLAY "Stereophonic"	FEATURED ACTRESS IN A MUSICAL Kecia Lewis, "Hell's Kitchen"	COSTUME DESIGN OF A PLAY Dede Ayite, "Jaja's African Hair Braiding"
REVIVAL OF A MUSICAL "Merrily We Roll Along"	FEATURED ACTOR IN A MUSICAL Daniel Radcliffe, "Merrily We Roll Along"	COSTUME DESIGN OF A MUSICAL Linda Cho, "The Great Gatsby"
REVIVAL OF A PLAY "Appropriate"	DIRECTION OF A PLAY Daniel Aukin, "Stereophonic"	LIGHTING DESIGN OF A PLAY Jane Cox, "Appropriate"
LEAD ACTRESS IN A MUSICAL Maleah Joi Moon, "Hell's Kitchen"	DIRECTION OF A MUSICAL Danya Taymor, "The Outsiders"	LIGHTING DESIGN OF A MUSICAL Brian MacDevitt and Hana S. Kim, "The Outsiders"
LEAD ACTOR IN A MUSICAL Jonathan Groff, "Merrily We Roll Along"	BOOK OF A MUSICAL Shaina Taub, "Suffs"	SOUND DESIGN OF A PLAY Ryan Rumery, "Stereophonic"
LEAD ACTRESS IN A PLAY Sarah Paulson, "Appropriate"	ORCHESTRATIONS Jonathan Tunick, "Merrily We Roll Along"	SOUND DESIGN OF A MUSICAL Cody Spencer, "The Outsiders"
LEAD ACTOR IN A PLAY Jeremy Strong, "An Enemy of the People"	CHOREOGRAPHY Justin Peck, "Illinois"	ORIGINAL SCORE (MUSIC AND/OR LYRICS) WRITTEN FOR THE THEATER "Suffs," music & lyrics: Shaina Taub
FEATURED ACTRESS IN A PLAY Kara Young, "Purlie Victorious: A Non-Confederate Romp Through the Cotton Patch"	SCENIC DESIGN OF A PLAY David Zinn, "Stereophonic"	
	SCENIC DESIGN OF A MUSICAL	

would have been shocked if the winner had been "Suffs" (which took hefty prizes for book and score), "Hell's Kitchen," "Water for Elephants" or "Illinois" (borne aloft on Justin Peck's Tony-winning choreography). I assumed "Hell's Kitchen" would get the nod for the simple reason that it was the

one show I kept recommending to people looking for a euphoric musical experience. The production, directed by Michael Greif, is a love letter to New York from one of its beloved natives: singer-songwriter Alicia Keys.

Maleah Joi Moon, in a thrilling Broadway debut,

won the Tony for lead actress in a musical for her performance as Ali, the gifted young protagonist of "Hell's Kitchen," who makes Keys' hits her own. Kecia Lewis received the award for featured actress in a musical, and her heartfelt acceptance speech conveyed the profound emotional gravity

of her portrayal of Ali's mighty piano teacher.

But Tony voters spread the love around musical categories. In the end, artistic daring may have given the edge to "The Outsiders," a musical adaptation of S.E. Hinton's young-adult classic. I described the show as a "thrilling mess" when I reviewed it in its La Jolla Playhouse premiere, and I meant these words as a compliment.

Danya Taymor won for her spectacularly original direction in a stunning upset that also made discerning sense. Her visionary staging is the backbone of a show that features a book by Adam Rapp and Justin Levine and a score by Jamestown Revival (Jonathan Clay and Zach Chance) and Levine. The wide-ranging roster of producers, which includes Angelina Jolie and the Geffen Playhouse, hints at the varied forces that helped this underdog musical realize its dream.

But ironically, it took a more than 40-year-old flop to restore everyone's faith in the American musical. "Merrily We Roll Along," the Stephen Sondheim-George Furth show that bombed when it premiered in 1981, finally found redemption on Broadway. The production, directed by Maria Friedman and starring Jonathan Groff, won the Tony for musical revival in what surely must have been a landslide victory. (If you saw the misbegotten revival of "Cabaret," you know that I'm not being hyperbolic.)

Friedman, who found the beating heart of a musical that can come off as cold and cynical, may not have won the Tony for her direction, as most pundits expected. But she deserves a medal for elevating "Merrily" to the upper ranks of the Sondheim canon.

Groff, who had previously been nominated for his performances in "Spring Awakening" and "Hamilton," earned his first Tony for his humanizing take on Franklin Shepard, the character at the center of the musical and historically the crux of its difficulty. Daniel Radcliffe, who won for featured actor in a musical, and Lindsay Mendez play Franklin's best friends, who are bitterly disappointed in the way he's sold out. They were invaluable in making "Merrily" the brightest story of the 2023-24 Broadway season.

How well will this revival travel? Very well, but having seen the earlier London version of Friedman's revival, I have to say that there is a unique chemistry to the New York cast that shouldn't be underestimated. If there's any justice in the theatrical universe, PBS will film the show before it closes on July 7, so that more theater lovers can appreciate this tremendous achievement.

The only downside is that Sondheim isn't around to bask in the belated glory. Looking heavenward when accepting the award for best musical revival, Friedman was pleased to let Sondheim and Furth know that their recalcitrant masterpiece is now popular.

My biggest regret of my limited Broadway theatergoing was not getting to see the revival of Branden Jacobs-Jenkins' "Appropri-

ate," which won for play revival. A last-minute scheduling change forced me to give up my tickets to a play I saw at the Mark Taper Forum in 2015. By all reports, Lila Neugebauer's production brought new subtlety to a family drama that rips the cover off society's lid.

Sarah Paulson, who won for her lead performance, was heralded for her ability to tone down the melodramatics of her character without soft-pedaling the villainy. I can appreciate how good she must have been because Paulson managed to fend off a late-season charge from Jessica Lange, the star of Paula Vogel's "Mother Play," whose performance as the unaccepting mother of two queer children was one of the most spellbinding feats of acting I've seen this year.

PBS, which might want to call an emergency meeting with the producers of "Appropriate," did a great service in presenting another contender for play revival, Ossie Davis' "Purlie Victorious: A Non-Confederate Romp Through the Cotton Patch." The galvanic performances of Leslie Odom Jr. and Kara Young, who won for featured actress in a play, are safely preserved and available for streaming.

"An Enemy of the People" — starring Jeremy Strong (who won for lead actor in a play) and Michael Imperioli — also was competing in this category (no matter that Amy Herzog's new adaptation of Ibsen's drama is as much her own work as Ibsen's). But it's hard to imagine this confluence of talent happening anywhere other than Broadway or London's West End.

It was a stronger-than-expected year for new plays. "Mother Play" would work beautifully at the Geffen Playhouse, the Taper or Pasadena Playhouse. Amy Herzog's "Mary Jane" would be a smart choice for the Kirk Douglas Theatre. The Geffen Playhouse has had a long relationship with Joshua Harmon ("Bad Jews," "Significant Other") and might want to offer L.A. audiences his ambitious epic "Prayer for the French Republic."

And I sincerely hope that Jocelyn Bioh's "Jaja's African Hair Braiding," a workplace comedy with serious concerns about immigration, will soon find a home on one of our stages. I saw the Broadway production of "Jaja's" when it was still playing at the Samuel J. Friedman Theatre via the League of Live Stream Theatre and look forward to an in-person encounter, whether that's through the Manhattan Theatre Club touring production or a fresh local staging.

Broadway is slowly accepting the reality that new thinking isn't a luxury but a necessity. The rest of the theater world should follow suit. In an uncertain year, these admirable Tony winners, rather than providing automatic answers to programming woes, pose provocative questions and creative challenges.

Artistic leaders might want to venture down the "Stereophonic" path for a change. In fearlessly embracing risk, they too might end up with the most Tony-nominated play in history.

Hollywood urged to tell climate change stories

[**Clinton**, from E1] on babies, on toddlers," Clinton said. "We know that the pollution from wildfires, something that you're all too familiar with here, has respiratory consequences — and most severely on children. [We know] what that means for the development of asthma and other respiratory conditions."

There's science backing up those assertions.

The day after Clinton's remarks, The Times' Hayley Smith wrote about new research finding a significant increase in the odds of preterm birth — which can lead to health complications — during heat waves, and an increase in the odds of preterm birth as Earth heats up overall. More air pollution also resulted in more preterm births and more congenital anomalies.

Extreme heat and low air quality "were associated with a number of issues, including gestational diabetes and other hypertensive

pregnancy disorders, miscarriage, stillbirth and increased risk of hospitalization for newborns and infants," Smith wrote.

May 2024, meanwhile, marked 12 straight months of record-breaking heat globally. And there's another new study concluding that tiny particles in wildfire smoke contributed to at least 52,000 premature deaths in California over a decade — and that was before the summer the sky turned orange. And climate pollution keeps accumulating in the atmosphere.

It's scary enough to read on your phone or computer screen. Do you really need to see it on Disney+ or Amazon's Prime Video?

Depends on how the writers, actors and directors handle it, if you ask me.

Most of us watch films and shows about less-than-happy topics — war, heartbreak, loss, the tragicomic existence of life behind a desk in a faceless bureau-

cracy. We seek out these stories not because we enjoy suffering but because they make us feel seen.

What's stopping Hollywood studios from doing the same with the climate crisis and with climate solutions?

One of the panelists who shared the stage with Clinton at the Environmental Media Assn. summit has already done it.

Writer and producer Gloria Calderón Kellett, a co-showrunner on the Netflix sitcom "One Day at a Time," discussed the climate messaging she slipped into the series — usually by having characters model climate-friendly, cost-saving behaviors such as using glass water bottles, having solar panels on their roofs and eating leftovers that would otherwise go to a landfill.

"Because I am the child of immigrants, we were green before it was cool to be green. It's called being poor. Washing aluminum foil? We did," Calderón Kellett said.

"My daughter thinks it's way cooler to go to Goodwill than to do fast fashion."

That was key to the story, she added — it centered on an immigrant family, so those actions were organic to the characters. Climate didn't feel shoehorned in. When teenage Elena, a social justice warrior, dressed up as climate activist Greta Thunberg for Halloween — with Elena's significant other in costume as a melting iceberg — it felt natural, not like a lesson in morality.

"It is such a part of the immigrant experience," Calderón Kellett said.

Clinton, through her foundation, wants to make it easier for other showrunners to tell similar stories.

"When you think about the effects of climate change, please think about children," she said.

The people who make "Sesame Street" are thinking along similar lines. Sesame Workshop — the New York nonprofit behind the

beloved puppet show — is working with the global charity Save the Children to raise \$500,000 to develop programming that would help kids and their families learn to cope with climate disasters and educate them about solutions.

But on the whole, the entertainment industry has been slow to enter the climate era.

An analysis from USC researchers and the nonprofit consulting firm Good Energy found that fewer than 3% of scripted movies and TV episodes from 2016 through 2020 so much as mentioned global warming or a long list of related keywords.

Another analysis from Colby College and Good Energy found that of 250 of the most popular films of the last decade, not even 10% passed the Climate Reality Check, which measures whether a story or its characters acknowledge that climate change is happening.

Anna Jane Joyner, Good

Energy's founder and chief executive, joined Clinton onstage at the summit.

Joyner has heard from many screenwriters that "their own anxiety about their own carbon footprint was making them feel like they couldn't authentically write about" climate. As in, because they drive a gasoline car or use plastic straws, it's not fair for them to write about the crisis.

That's an attitude she's trying to help storytellers overcome.

"It is not our fault that we were born into this economic system," Joyner said.

Words to live by. Words to tell stories about.

This column is from the June 11 edition of Boiling Point, an email newsletter about climate change and the environment in California and the American West. For more climate and environment news, follow @Sammy_Roth on X.

COMICS

SUDOKU

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6/18/24

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Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 or 2-by-3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 (or 1 to 6 for the smaller grid). For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit www.sudoku.org.uk.

KENKEN

Every box will contain a number; numbers depend on the size of the grid. For a 6x6 puzzle, use Nos. 1-6. Do not repeat a number in any row or column. The numbers in each heavily outlined set of squares must combine to produce the target number found in the top left corner of the cage using the mathematical operation indicated. A number can be repeated within a cage as long as it is not in the same row or column.

24X

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EASY

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CHALLENGING

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PREVIOUS ANSWERS

6/18/24

HOROSCOPE

By HOLIDAY MATHIS

Aries (March 21-April 19): Those who are unwilling to tolerate what they don't like will miss out on the main growth opportunity of the day.

Taurus (April 20-May 20): It's good to do pointless things sometimes, if only to remind yourself that living is its own prize.

Gemini (May 21-June 21): You'll be praised. You may think the props are unwarranted, nonetheless, you'll help many by merely promising small and delivering on it.

Cancer (June 22-July 22): Being well matched is about sharing a range of comfortable topics and intensities, values and vibes.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): When things didn't go your way, you came at the problem from a different side and ultimately were grateful for the instigating incident. His-

tory is about to repeat.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Reconnecting with loved ones can strengthen your support network. It can also irritate you to no end, so you're judicious and often opt to meet new people instead of scrolling through contacts.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23): When your fine taste gives you expensive appetites, you feel it's a burden. But today, your taste will be a boon.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21): You're more concerned with being warm than cool, but somehow today you'll manage to achieve both at once.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You'll get specific about what you want and need because the typical answers are so ubiquitous that they no longer mean anything to you.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): It is possible for your body and mind to experience fear-like symptoms and your spirit to nonetheless

be fearless.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You like to feel you've earned everything that comes to you. Don't be too literal about it today. Be open to receiving.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20): Tighten the plan. Leave little to chance. Openings invite chaotic elements to drop in. K

Today's birthday (June 18): It's your most prolific and productive year to date; tight plans become beautiful experiences. More highlights: You'll discover the power of your voice, get clear on your message and sharpen your ideas. Everything aligns to communicate and inspire. You'll be appreciated, adored and publicized. Aries and Aquarius adore you. Your lucky numbers: 15, 18, 32, 12 and 8.

Mathis writes her column for Creators Syndicate Inc. The horoscope should be read for entertainment.

CROSSWORD

Edited By Patti Varol
By Susan Gelfand

- ACROSS**
- 1 Change back to zero
- 6 Aid and _
- 10 Elton John's "Bennie and the _"
- 14 Playful furry swimmer
- 15 Source of torment
- 16 She loves, in Latin
- 17 Fondly remembered moment
- 20 Flesh and blood
- 21 The whole nine yards
- 22 Spirited person
- 23 "Nothing Compares 2 U" singer Sinéad
- 25 Mongrel
- 26 Summer in Saint-Étienne
- 27 Sense of self
- 28 More miffed
- 30 Netflix's "The Crown," for one
- 34 Noshes _
- 38 "I'm well _"
- 39 North Pole worker
- 40 Egyptian peninsula
- 41 Internet phenomenon
- 42 Pretend to be asleep
- 44 Sci-fi robot
- 46 Reuben bread
- 47 Aliens, briefly
- 50 Winter hrs. in Boston
- 51 Quiet place to get a loan
- 55 Arouses, as curiosity
- 57 Otherwise
- 58 Volcano opening?
- 59 Rice-filled appetizers with red shells, and a hint to the words that bookend 17-, 30-, and 42-Across
- 62 Hodgepodge
- 63 PlayStation maker
- 64 Unsophisticated
- 65 Rx orders
- 66 Whole bunch
- 67 Agrees (with)
- DOWN**
- 1 Young wallaby in a Nickelodeon animated series
- 2 Moral standard
- 3 Courtroom fig. with a keyboard
- 4 Always, poetically
- 5 Musical instrument named for its shape
- 6 Really hate

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30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37

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44 45 46

47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54

55 56 57 58

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62 63 64

65 66 67

7 Legendary folk singer

8 Wrap up

9 Deep-fried Japanese dish

10 Jazz sessions

11 Overact

12 Medium's medium

13 Fashion sense

18 Didn't ask for a card in blackjack

19 Limerick's land

24 Came close to

25 Warm and cozy

28 Waldorf _

29 "Stranger Things" actor

30 Los Angeles footballer

31 Need to pay

32 Sweet tuber

33 Kindled again

35 FAQ entry

36 Greek consonant that resembles a "T"

37 _ card: smartphone insert

40 Protein-rich legumes

42 Have in one's hands

43 Light refractor

45 Snorkeling spot

47 English derby town

48 Sports championship

49 Underwater ink squirter

51 Fallingwater architect

52 Steer clear of

53 "Superman" actor

54 Christopher

55 Positive responses

56 Sci-fi saucers

57 Mediterranean volcano

60 What's up, _?

61 _ chi: martial art

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

DEBIT INCAPS
OREGANO DAILIAS
RALLIED ANIMATE
ASIO SESH PANIC
LOST LOLA ONT
DUO PERU INS
USO LANG EDITOR
PEPSI SIN DHON-
ERSATZ TATA PTA
TSA OPAL BOP
PIS ECRU MESA
ANTIC ATTA DINES
PICACOAT ALABAMA
ARRANGE REFINETS
IENDEU IHASH

6/18/24

BRIDGE

By FRANK STEWART

Bridge is making a major comeback on college campuses, bolstered by ACBL programs and the efforts of dedicated volunteers.

Many students attended the ACBL's Spring NABC. In today's deal from a pairs event, North-South were Rahul Garga and R.E. Stern, from the University of Chicago Bridge Club.

Junior players are known for fearless bidding. When East opened 2NT, Stern climbed right in with three spades. West bid 3NT, but Garga went to four spades.

East doubled that, though he might have reasoned that opponents who had bid to the skies with no high cards to speak of surely knew something about the

distribution that he didn't. (I won't say, though I am tempted to, that anybody who opens 2NT as East deserves whatever happens to him.)

West sat for the double and led a trump, but Stern had no trouble wrapping up 10 tricks, scoring his king of diamonds plus nine trump tricks with a crossruff.

You hold: ♠ 7 ♥ K J 10 5 ♦ Q 9 8 4 3 ♣ Q 10 3. Neither vulnerable. Your partner opens one club, and the next player bids one spade. You double (negative), the player at your left bids two spades, and two passes follow. What do you say?

Answer: Partner may have four decent spades, and you may have no good trump suit. Still, I would be reluctant to let the opponents play at the two level.

East dealer
Neither side vulnerable

NORTH
♠ 10 8 6 5 4
♥ Q 8 6 4 3
♦ 10 5
♣ 4

WEST
♠ 7
♥ K J 10 5
♦ Q 9 8 4 3
♣ Q 10 3

EAST
♠ A
♥ A 9 7 2
♦ A J 7 6
♣ A K 8 2

SOUTH
♠ K Q J 9 3 2
♥ None
♦ K 2
♣ J 9 7 6 5

EAST
2 NT(!)
Dbl

SOUTH
3 ♣
All Pass

WEST
3 NT

NORTH
4 ♠

Opening lead — ♠ 7

Tribune Content Agency

ASK AMY

Daycare is pushing child

Dear Amy: My husband and I have a son who is 18 months old. He seems on track for all of the developmental milestones.

He goes to daycare three days a week.

The children are separated according to age. The place came highly recommended by other parents in our neighborhood, and we've been happy with the quality of care.

Last week, one of the staff members told me that his behavior is worse than the other kids in his group. She said he has trouble sharing and that when he doesn't get what he wants, he will cry.

My husband and I are wondering if we are spoiling our son by reinforcing this behavior at home.

We're not sure how to react to this.

WONDERING PARENTS

advice, and perhaps spend some time observing your child in this setting.

Your son seems perfectly normal, but I wonder about this daycare — or this specific caregiver.

Dear Readers: The following Q&A first ran in 2014.

Dear Amy: Every fall, my sister, cousins and a cousin's sister-in-law have a weekend shopping in our home city. We stay in a hotel, treat ourselves, shop for our kids and go out for meals. It is a great time to reconnect.

We do not invite my sister "Wendy." She is offended to the point of tears when she finds we have not invited her. Two sisters and I are close in age, but Wendy hasn't been as close to this set of cousins as my sister and I have been.

We are all married stay-at-home moms. Wendy is a divorced, working mom with one young child.

We know she doesn't have much money for such an outing. She also does not have many of the same interests as we do. We're not interested in what she has to talk about. She claims to have a neurological disease that some of us feel is more psychosomatic than real, which she uses to avoid getting up for church on Sundays.

She complains about her ex who left her for another woman, but everyone knows it takes "two to tango" and she is not without fault.

We're all very active churchgoers, while she only sporadically attends. She does not really fit in with us.

She takes it very personally, and last year even came over to my home unannounced crying about it, which caused my husband to threaten to call the police if she did not leave.

Now she barely speaks to me and has told our relatives I am a horrible person (even though I've helped her).

How can we get her to understand that she should find another set of friends whose lives and interests align more closely with hers?

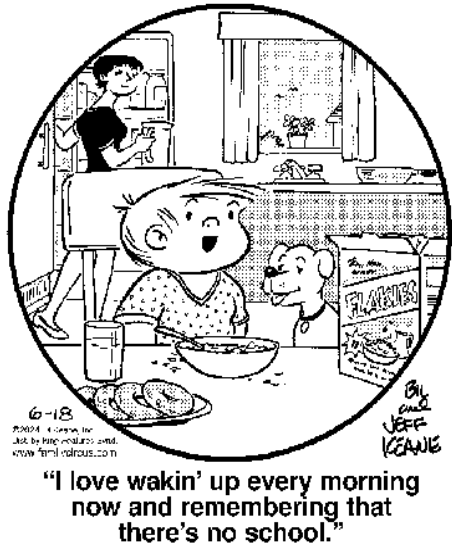
SAD SISTER

Dear Sad: I'm with Wendy: You are a horrible person.

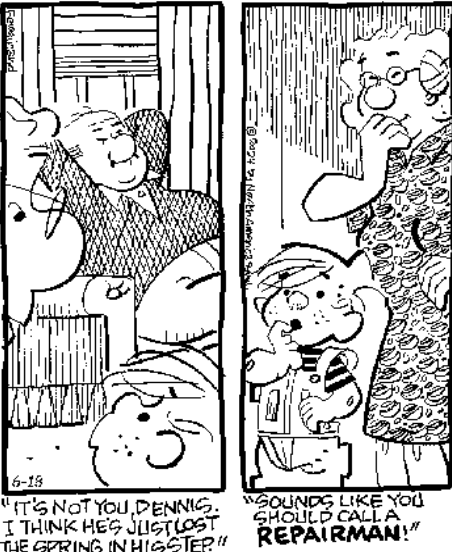
You can do whatever you want and associate with — or exclude — whomever you want, but you don't get to also blame the excluded person for not "fitting in."

The only way Wendy would ever fit in would be for you to make room for her. You are unwilling to do that, and that is your choice. But her being upset is completely justified, and you'll just have to live with that.

FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane



DENNIS THE MENACE By Hank Ketcham



FREE RANGE By Bill Whitehead



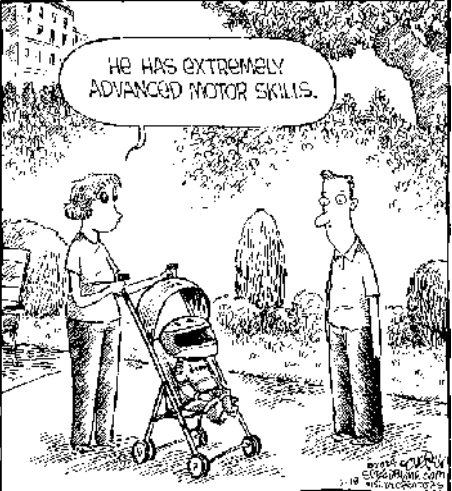
MARMADUKE By Brad & Paul Anderson



BLISS By Harry Bliss



SPEED BUMP By Dave Coverly





“MY OWN Private Idaho,” with Keanu Reeves, left, and River Phoenix, wowed critics, audiences in 1991.

Looking back at key point in queer cinema

[Queer films, from E1] Rich identified them more as embodying a common style. “Call it ‘Homo Pomo,’” she wrote in 1992.

No sooner had the Village Voice published Rich’s ambitious overview of this budding canon than Britain’s film magazine Sight and Sound reprinted it and used it as the cornerstone of a conference at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London. Shortly thereafter, the U.K.’s Channel 4 did a special on it.

“Then it got picked up by distributors and theaters,” Rich recalls. “And it became a way to promote films that were part of this energy that I had named. It turned out to have this radioactive half-life and has just kept going, which is very lovely.” (As for her own fame for adding to the lexicon, she is self-deprecating: “I discovered something as a writer then: If you write a hook that turns out to be useful for marketing, you can live forever.”)

Rich remembers the era well. Living in New York City, she was watching academics wrestle with “queer,” then still a derogatory term, at conferences and in classrooms, while protest groups like ACT UP, the

AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power, and Queer Nation were reclaiming the word as they papered the streets in response to government inaction over the AIDS epidemic.

“I had these two dimensions to this word that were perfect for me,” Rich says. “It was about spinning out this thing called ‘queer theory’ and what that would mean, what it was grounded in and what it could illuminate. But almost at the same minute, it became ‘We’re here, we’re queer, get used to it!’ It became a kind of activist rallying call.”

As she watched the wryly erotic work of Gus Van Sant, the poetic and urgent sensibility of Isaac Julien, the anarchic energy of Gregg Araki, the sharp satire of Cheryl Dunye’s videos at festivals like Sundance and Lincoln Center’s New Directors/New Films, Rich felt emboldened to coin a phrase that remains as provocative now as it was revelatory back then.

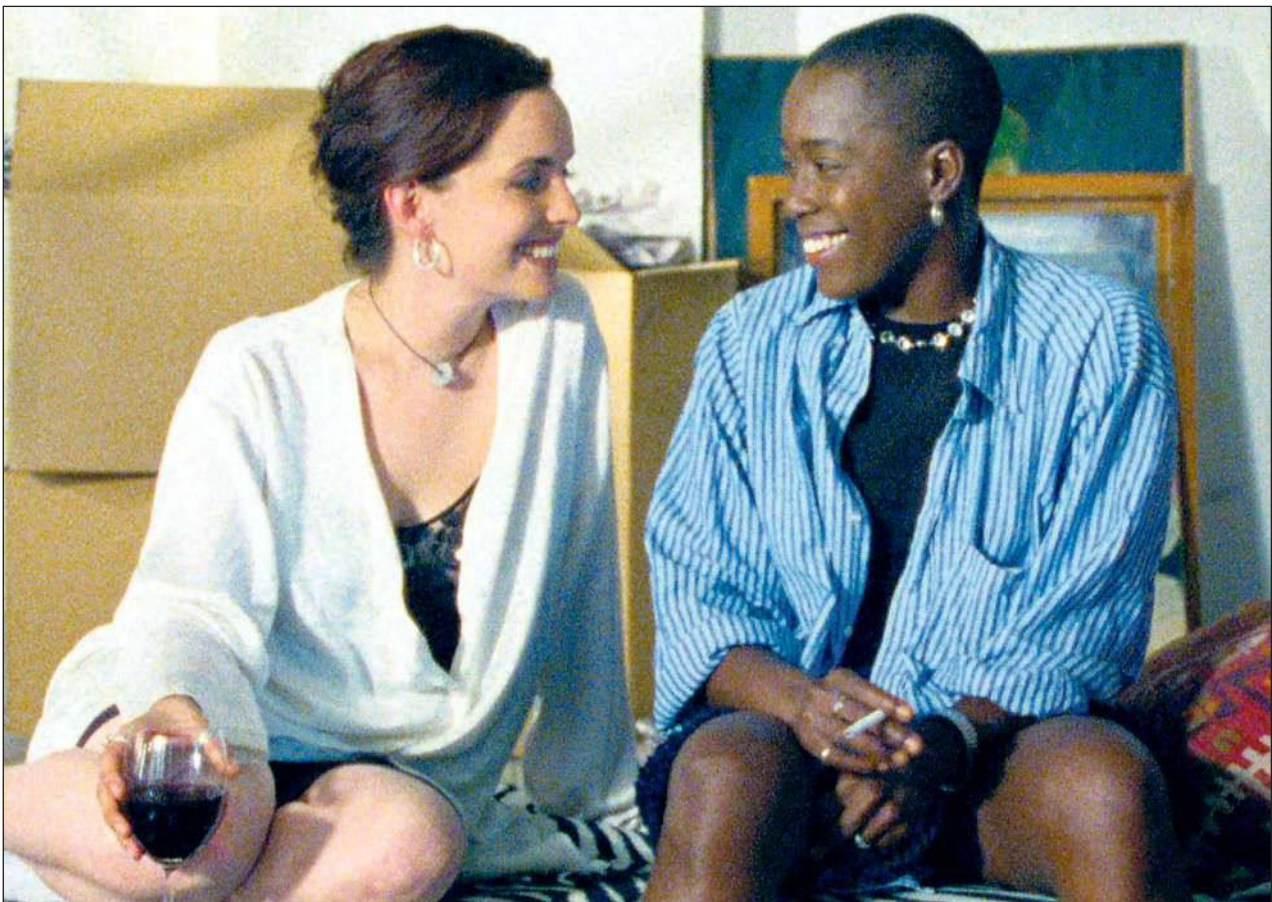
“If the films hadn’t been so important, and if the filmmakers hadn’t kept making work, and if they hadn’t been joined by other wonderful filmmakers, I think this would have faded

away,” Rich adds. The explosion of cinema Rich was describing was unprecedented.

“You could not go to movie theaters and see gay films at that time,” she says. “There were very few, apart from Fassbinder. They had to be subtitled or else you couldn’t see them. And this changed that forever. It changed it so much that it became commonplace and nothing special, and I’ll just wait till it’s on Netflix or whatever. But I think that the fact of having gay films, gay sex, lesbian romance, all of that on big screens at your multiplex, was absolutely earth-shattering for people at that time.”

New Queer Cinema was all the rage. It was of and for the moment. In January 1991 at Sundance, Haynes’ “Poison,” a sci-fi-horror triptych inspired by the novels of Jean Genet, and director Jennie Livingston’s “Paris Is Burning,” a documentary about ball culture in New York City, took top honors from its juries.

A few months later, Van Sant’s street-hustler road trip drama “My Own Private Idaho” left the 1991 Venice



Images from Academy Museum of Motion Pictures

GUINEVERE TURNER, left, and Cheryl Dunye starred in the groundbreaking “The Watermelon Woman.”



“PARIS Is Burning,” about New York ball culture, was honored at 1991 Sundance.

International Film Festival with stellar reviews and a best actor award for the incandescent River Phoenix.

Hitting a chord with critics and audiences alike (Van Sant’s movie went on to gross \$8 million, Livingston’s doc \$3.7 million), these films remain urgent and current, as the Academy Museum series proves.

Part of that has to do with how early-1990s, in-your-face filmmaking can still shock. The movies embraced pastiche, appropriation and irony. In doing so, they created exciting new ways of telling gay and lesbian stories. And they did so by abrasively pushing back against the neat confines of identity politics.

To merely call them “gay films” would have been insufficient. As Rich wrote then, they were “irreverent, energetic, alternately minimalist and excessive. Above all, they’re full of pleasure. They’re here, they’re queer, get hip to them.”

It’s those very lines that give the Academy Museum screening series its title. In addition to featuring early performances from Keanu Reeves (“My Own Private Idaho”) and Tilda Swinton (“Edward II”), the series spotlights lesser-known and -discussed films.

That includes Araki’s raucous 1992 road movie “The Living End,” which centers on two HIV-positive gay men on the run, and Rose Troche’s 1994 lesbian comedy “Go Fish,” which was rightly credited with making sure the new canon being enshrined wasn’t an all-boys’ club. There is pain in these films but also laughter and joy.

“It was experienced like a flash of pleasure,” Rich says. “Almost like the flash of green, legendarily at sunset. It was a kind of jolt. A kind of shot in the arm. Like ‘OK, we can do this,’ you know? ‘Here’s some candy. And now back to the front lines.’”

What was inspiring about those films, she adds, was the way they were willing to give pleasure — and enact it onscreen — at a time when it was in short supply.

Academy Museum series curator K.J. Relth-Miller’s reassembly of this crackling wave is an apt opportunity to revisit those pleasures with the vantage of decades’ worth of hindsight.

“People were so beaten down by the horrors of AIDS,” says Rich. “In 1992, we still had no cocktail. Still had no cure. AZT was coming along but there were big fights over whether to take it or not. People were still dying. So it wasn’t the celebration of the end of an epidemic. It was kind of a rest stop, a kind of breathing room for people to kind of count their losses and try to figure out how to create a space of relief and even pleasure in the midst of that sorrow.”

New Queer Cinema’s filmmakers transformed that pain into glittering wake-up calls that forced audiences, critics, distributors and even fellow artists to pay attention.

“These films were a rallying cry,” Rich says. “You felt the joyousness of their arrival in the world. They cleared this space for themselves. They kind of put up their own Klieg lights. It wasn’t pleasure without pain. I think that tricky balance was always there.”

You can see that balance at work in the beauty of Ellen Kuras’ gorgeous black-and-white cinematography for Tom Kalin’s murder-obsessed “Swoon” (1992), a film Rich says put the “homo back in homicide.” That ability to turn pain and heartbreak into stirring cinematic images remains a hallmark of this generation of filmmakers.

Does their legacy continue? Rich is quick to single out Paul B. Preciado’s 2023 Virginia Woolf-infused “Orlando, My Political Biography” as a masterpiece of trans cinema. (The docu-essay is coming to the Criterion Collection’s Janus Contemporaries label at the end of June.) “We need so many more films like that, on other issues as well as about queer or trans life,” she says.

Looking at the current cinematic landscape, she can’t quite bring herself to be too optimistic. “It’s amazing to me the extent to which the film industry has failed us in not making films about the horrors of the modern world,” Rich says. “It has just turned its back and made entertainment.”

Therein lies the still-prickly promise of projects like the Beatles-in-ascent period piece “The Hours and Times” and the Brit-punk drama “Young Soul Rebels” — both of which can be seen as part of the Academy Museum’s series.

“These films stand as a kind of monument to a period as much as they do to a reinvention of a medium,” Rich offers. “I think that’s why they last. Nobody’s really outdone them yet. They’re still raw. And there’s still a place for them.”



IAN HART, left, portrays John Lennon to David Angus’ band manager Brian Epstein in the 1991 Beatles-in-ascent period piece “The Hours and Times.”

Los Angeles Times

theEnvelope

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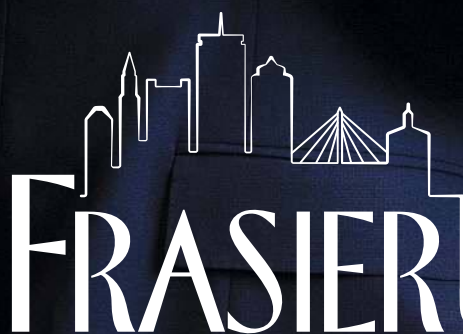
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For The Times

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LORRAINE ALI
Los Angeles Times

HIROYUKI SANADA ('SHŌGUN')
DONALD GLOVER
(**'MR. & MRS. SMITH'**)
WALTON GOGGINS ('FALLOUT')
OMAR SY ('LUPIN')
ZAHN MCCLARNON
(**'DARK WINDS'**)
IDRIS ELBA ('HIJACK')

Sanada was one of the only reasons I stuck with "West-world" after Season 1. As a lovelorn samurai, he was a grounding presence in a confusing narrative. In "Shōgun," he has room to stretch beyond impressive swordfighting scenes ... and he slays.



KRISTEN BALDWIN
Entertainment Weekly

HIROYUKI SANADA ('SHŌGUN')
WALTON GOGGINS ('FALLOUT')
DONALD GLOVER
(**'MR. & MRS. SMITH'**)
NATHAN FIELDER ('THE CURSE')
GARY OLDMAN ('SLOW HORSES')
DOMINIC WEST ('THE CROWN')

This is the year that Emmy voters shall rain down accolades on Walton Goggins, who commands the screen as the fearsome and funny Ghoul in Prime Video's hit adaptation of the game "Fallout." "Shōgun's" Hiroiyuki Sanada should have strong momentum in this category as well.

Lead Actor,
Drama

HIROYUKI SANADA

MUCH LIKE DRAMA LEAD ACTRESS, THE LEAD ACTOR CATEGORY WILL see a completely new slate of names compared to last year's nominees. Panelists took the chance to advocate for a mix of new and overlooked favorites to make the cut. The overwhelming front-runner in this round is Hiroiyuki Sanada, *the* shōgun of "Shōgun." As the quietly ambitious Lord Toranaga, "The Japanese martial arts star has room to stretch beyond impressive swordfighting scenes ... and he slays," says Lorraine Ali. A close second is Walton Goggins, whose string of "morally ambiguous characters that you can't help but love," as Glenn Whipp puts it, continues on "Fallout." Kristen Baldwin agrees, insisting, "This is the year that Emmy voters shall rain down accolades on Goggins, who commands the screen as the fearsome and funny Ghoul."



GLENN WHIPP
Los Angeles Times

HIROYUKI SANADA ('SHŌGUN')
COSMO JARVIS ('SHŌGUN')
WALTON GOGGINS ('FALLOUT')
GARY OLDMAN ('SLOW HORSES')
DOMINIC WEST ('THE CROWN')
DONALD GLOVER
(**'MR. & MRS. SMITH'**)

Is there a better actor than Walton Goggins when it comes to playing morally ambiguous characters that you can't help but love? If you've seen the postapocalyptic "Fallout" (or "Justified" or "The Hateful Eight" or ... it's a long list), you know that's a rhetorical question.



MATT ROUSH
TV Guide

HIROYUKI SANADA ('SHŌGUN')
GARY OLDMAN ('SLOW HORSES')
DONALD GLOVER
(**'MR. & MRS. SMITH'**)
WALTON GOGGINS ('FALLOUT')
DOMINIC WEST ('THE CROWN')
ZAHN MCCLARNON
(**'DARK WINDS'**)

Lee Jung-jae's "Squid Game" win is precedent for a lead actor to win for a non-English-language performance. Sanada's majestic Lord Toranaga surely qualifies. I'm also rooting for Gary Oldman to finally be recognized.



TREY MANGUM
Shadow and Act

JACOB ANDERSON
(**'INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE'**)
NCUTI GATWA ('DOCTOR WHO')
HIROYUKI SANADA ('SHŌGUN')
IDRIS ELBA ('HIJACK')
WALTON GOGGINS ('FALLOUT')
DOMINIC WEST ('THE CROWN')

We need to be talking about "Interview With the Vampire's" Jacob Anderson. Walton Goggins is the glue that draws you into "Fallout," Idris Elba getting in for "Hijack" would be a welcome surprise. But Hiroiyuki Sanada is Shōgun, and I can't see it going any other way.

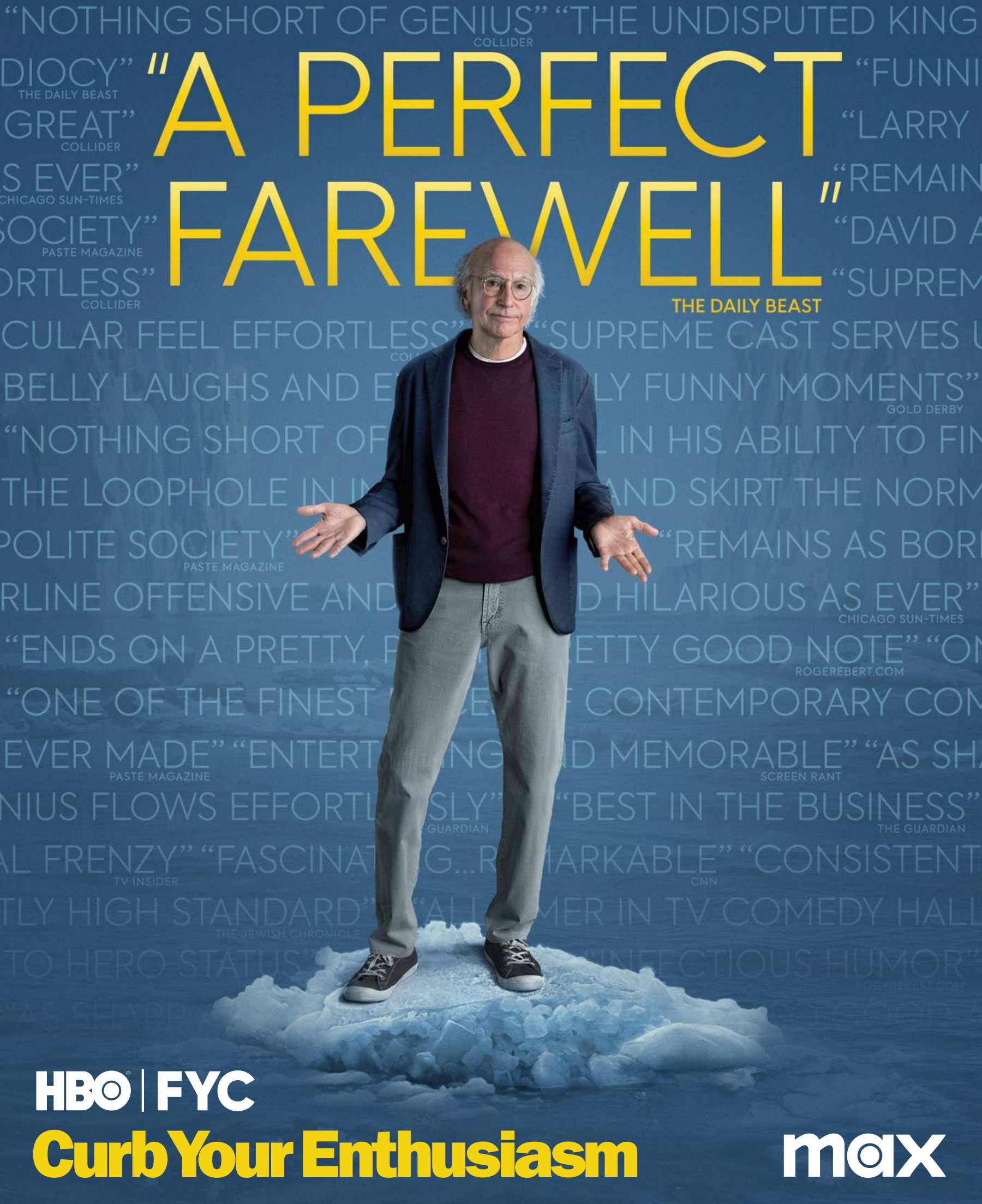


TRACY BROWN
Los Angeles Times

HIROYUKI SANADA ('SHŌGUN')
WALTON GOGGINS ('FALLOUT')
NCUTI GATWA ('DOCTOR WHO')
COSMO JARVIS ('SHŌGUN')
DONALD GLOVER
(**'MR. & MRS. SMITH'**)
ZAHN MCCLARNON
(**'DARK WINDS'**)

Sanada seems like a shoo-in as the Shōgun (to be) of "Shōgun," though Walton Goggins as "Fallout's" charismatic but ruthless Ghoul makes a strong case here. Ncuti Gatwa brings a fresh energy to the long-running "Doctor Who."

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For The Times



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He's quickly risen to leading man, but he's taking it 'One Day' at a time

The Contenders
Actor

Leo Woodall is awed by viewers' emotional reactions to the Netflix romance about friends turned lovers, though his attention is already on his next projects.

HAVEN'T SEEN THIS ONE specifically," Leo Woodall says as a sheepish smile — the one that has made hearts flutter since Netflix dropped its adaptation of the angsty romantic drama "One Day," in which he stars — stretches across his face.

Woodall is well aware there is a trove of TikTok videos that document viewers' intensely emotional response to the series, which chronicles the 20-year torturous slow burn of unlikely friends Dex (Woodall) and Emma (Ambika Mod). His friends have passed some on, he says. But after pleasantries are exchanged at the start of this video call on a mid-May morning — with Woodall beaming in from London — I share my screen to guide him through a TikTok sampler of heartache.

There's a young woman, draped in a green blanket, in various states of complete anguish. Another video is a close-up shot of a young woman wiping tears from her face while watching an early interaction between Dex and Emma with the caption: "Me 2 days later still crying watching edits." The final video features a viewer who has just completed the series, camera turned to her face as she lies in utter despair against a pillow. One by one, Woodall lets out an "Oh, noooo!" as he watches.

"In the beginning, when the show came out, I was trying to keep up with some of the reactions to it," he adds. "I was just very intrigued and anxious to know what people thought and how they were responding to it — if they responded to it at all. But there's something cathartic and therapeutic about it. Everyone needs a good cry. We spend a lot of our time watching things, and you don't always have a real, emotional reaction."

It's also helped the actor's rising profile, taking him from a virtual unknown to an international heartthrob. After a key supporting turn in the sophomore season of HBO's "The White Lotus," playing the supposed nephew of a gay man trying to scam Jennifer Coolidge's wealthy character, the 27-year-old actor sent the internet into emotional freefall in February with the launch of the adaptation of David Nicholls'

bestselling novel. In the melancholic, angst-ridden friends-to-lovers tale — previously adapted for the big screen in 2011 with Anne Hathaway and Jim Sturgess — Woodall's Dex is privileged and charismatic but emotionally tortured as the series chronicles his evolving friendship with his witty and stubborn BFF across two decades on the same day.

Not that Woodall has had much time to make sense of the attention. He quickly began production in Budapest, Hungary, on the Nazi drama "Nuremberg," a film whose cast includes Russell Crowe, Michael Shannon and Rami Malek. With that now wrapped, he's begun work on the fourth installment of "Bridget Jones's Diary" opposite Renée Zellweger.

Although Woodall comes from a family of actors — his parents met at drama school and he is a descendant of silent film star Maxine Elliott — he hadn't always dreamed of pursuing the life. He thought maybe something sporty was in his cards. Then he discovered a couple key series and the curiosity kicked in.

"I remember I was in a gap year, working in a bar, not doing anything of great worth for my future, and I started just thinking about it," he says. "It was a few things: It was 'Peaky Blinders,' also 'Skins.' I watched the two seasons that Jack O'Connell was in. I remember seeing his character and being like, 'Whoa, that's fun. Whatever he's doing, that's cool.' I started looking into his road to playing that character. And yeah, watching 'Peaky Blinders' and just felt like doing a Tommy Shelby (Cillian Murphy) impression in the mirror. [Laughs] It's so embarrassing. I would start improvising in the world of 'Peaky Blinders.'"

Woodall graduated in 2019 from Arts Educational School, where he studied acting, before landing minor roles in such TV shows as "Vampire Academy" and "Citadel." He was filming "The White Lotus" when he watched the film version of "One Day" as prep work for his audition: "I didn't know how it was gonna end," he says. "And I remember I was in my kitchen cooking something, and I turned my eyes away for a second and I look back and Emma had been hit. And I was like, 'What the f—?

How could you do us like that?'"

It added to his intrigue of, as he describes it, "a love story that wasn't really just a romantic story. It's about these two people who grow up together, and also apart. It's about their friendship more than it is about, 'Are they gonna get together?' I know that is a huge part of it, but you do just see a *real* friendship." Then there's the complexity of Dex's journey.

"He's unbelievably fragile and vulnerable," he says. "I think there's a perception of him — not just from the people within the world of the story but people who have now seen the show — that he's got kind of a reputation and you learn as you go on that he's very insecure, he's lonely a lot of the time. He just wants to be connected to the people that he cares about. He gets in his own way a lot of the time. But truthfully, he's just someone who has a big, big heart. And it gets broken more than once."

Woodall humbly scoffs when asked what he's learned about what goes into playing a leading man — "Oh, I still don't know. Honestly, there's so many things to figure out still." But he's enthusiastic about this chapter in his story.

"I've been away from home for a very long time," he says. "And that can have its effects on your happiness. So I'm back in London now, and I'm very happy to see all my people and still work. That's the game of acting, you just never know. There is a momentum that exists." ✉

Story by
Yvonne
Villarreal

Photograph by
Jennifer
McCord
For The Times

↓ "One Day" returns to Emma (Ambika Mod) and Dex (Leo Woodall) on the same day annually for 20 years.



Bringing a local's perspective to BET's 'Diarra From Detroit'

Writer-producer **Diarra Kilpatrick** on representing her hometown on the series and the career boost she got from Viola Davis and her husband.

Story by
Diedre Johnson

DIARRA KILPATRICK, THE writer, created BET's "Diarra From Detroit" for Diarra, the actor, to portray Diarra, the fictional character who finds herself in the middle of a big mystery she's driven to solve.

But things weren't always coming up Diarra, Kilpatrick says by phone, until she met the right people.

"One of the first plays that I did when I first got to L.A. was 'The Piano Lesson,'" she recalls. "And Julius Tennon [actor-producer and husband of Viola Davis] was cast in that play. Julius lights up a room. He's very gregarious, and he and I bonded really quickly," she says.

"He [talked] about his wife so much, and I love a man who just loves his wife. It's just so endearing. Finally, we had a [cast] party, and [Davis] showed up, and I met her and I'm like, 'That's not your wife. That's *my* wife!'"

Kilpatrick had indeed been a fan since her youth, having watched Davis on the 2000 CBS series "City of Angels." "She played a nurse, and I would tape episodes of television when I was a kid. I don't know, I was weird. I've been a Black nerd all my life."

Years later, when Kilpatrick was promoting her web series "American Koko," the in-your-face (and Emmy-nominated ABC digital) comedy about an agency that specializes in rehabbing racists, she included the couple on the email chain. "And they called me back right away. We didn't have ... I don't even know how many views, but probably less than 1,000." Yet Davis and Tennon, who produce through their JuVee Productions, were eager to participate. "They were like, 'This is really funny. This is really good. We want to be a part of this. Let us know how we can help.' A lot of people do a lot of talking in this town, but whenever [those two] have said, 'We want to help,' they always have."

Before heading to Los Angeles, Kilpatrick had done community theater since childhood, attended prep schools and later graduated from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. She and her husband arrived in L.A. just as the 2008 Writers Guild strike was underway and, she says, she learned

the "power of the pivot." She acted in a lot of L.A. community theater and eventually wrote the web series "Koko." Her goal was to write and star in something that she could sell.

In doing her own material, she found her comedic voice. But even with good contacts and lucky breaks, negotiating Hollywood can be a struggle. Kilpatrick would go on to star in and produce short-lived series "The Climb" in 2017. Despite a pilot and two episodes, Prime Video did not move ahead with a full season. But she is both philosophical and pragmatic about her earlier efforts.

"I learned so much along the way," she says, "with my pilot at FX that didn't go, with my pilot at Showtime, at Amazon. I've tried to correct any failure. I do not like making the same mistake twice. So they've all been lessons I've incorporated into 'Diarra.'"

The series centers on Diarra Brickland, a teacher who turns amateur sleuth when her Tinder date disappears. Twists and turns follow as Diarra stumbles her way to answers. Which hat does she find most comfortable of the three she wears on the series? "Producing is the necessary evil," she says about a role in which she received lots of support. But "the writing and the acting comes really naturally. And I did get a lot of enjoyment and fulfillment out of it. I never really want to pick just one."

There's a scene in the fifth episode where Diarra attempts to introduce her friend (DomiNque Perry) at a glamorous, political fundraiser. Topsy and flailing a champagne glass around in one hand, she alludes to a Detroit stereotype about



cheap housing, making a wisecrack about outsiders thinking houses can be bought for \$15. The performance is pure entertainment, but for Kilpatrick it's more of a metaphor for her character, the show and her respect and love for her hometown.

"I wanted to clear that up. I think that people think about Detroit as being tough. And I understand that because a Detroiter will tell you, 'I'm from Detroit, man,' and the translation for that usually is 'Back up.' We will advertise our toughness, but there's just so much more that goes into making someone, and part of that is a sense of humor. Part of that is a soft heart, because you can't be resilient with a hard heart and no sense of humor," she says.

Kilpatrick doesn't ignore Detroit's systemic issues but stresses she wanted a healthy mix of heart and humor in "Diarra."

"Yes, it's a tough place. But it's also the place where people fall in love and get their first kiss. There's a romanticism to it as well, if you've actually grown up, lived and loved there. That's really what I wanted to capture." ✉

BOOKIE



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Leading a radical shift in television

From his communist politics to his surreal Prime Video series 'I'm a Virgo,' **Boots Riley** isn't afraid to go against the grain.

Story by
Akiva Gottlieb

Photograph by
Carlos
Gonzales
For The Times

TO SAY THAT **BOOTS RILEY** IS an unlikely showrunner is an understatement. The Oakland-based filmmaker, hip-hop MC and political activist may be the only self-identified communist in the entertainment industry. ¶ With his latest comic provocation, the absurdist seven-episode comedy "I'm a Virgo," Riley brought his brand of anticapitalist urban surrealism to Prime Video, garnering widespread acclaim during a summer of labor unrest. "Virgo" follows the adventures of Cootie (Jharrel Jerome), a 13-foot-tall Black teen raised in seclusion, as he emerges into a surreal, dystopian present-day Oakland. ¶ From his Oakland home, Riley explained why he's not planning to compromise, no matter which megacorporation is bankrolling his project.

You haven't left Oakland, and both "Virgo" and your previous "Sorry to Bother You" are set there. What makes this city so important to your artistic process?

I'm a better artist when I'm here. I grew up here. I know what each building means, and I have a reason for choosing locations other than just what the lines and colors look like. The general way that film and television is made is about making every place into no place. And that way it can easily be molded and sold to be anything. But I believe that the more specific you get, the more you make someone feel attached. Think about the greatest lyrics by songwriters who get very specific. You don't know who they're talking about or know that situation, but you feel their passion because of the detail.

Tell me about working in TV for the first time — did you feel a new sense of freedom or new constraints?

There's always a new set of constraints. And with TV, there is a specific way you're supposed to do things. And my art is very specific, very weird, very strange. There were a bunch of experts that weren't involved with the show that could chime in and say, "That's not the way you do it." From the practical effects and the way we shot it, to the way we had to schedule it around those things, to the story structure itself. Like, everything about this show was



done *wrong*. And that's part of what tickled me about being able to do it.

It has a distinctive look, with a tactile, handmade feel. What can you tell me about the production design?

I'm inspired by folks like [painter] Jacob Lawrence and Parliament-Funkadelic, who take different textures and slap them on top of each other. And you feel that in the editing style, the production design, because that's what Oakland is. There's a cultural and political hodgepodge that comes out in the beautiful clutter of the production and costume design.

It goes with the whole theme of everything I do — many people say about my art that I'm "doing a lot." There's a way to do it where it starts dissonant and then moves into harmony.

Your protagonist, Cootie, is 13 feet tall. What were the challenges of fitting this character into the frame?

First of all, I just really like wide, anamorphic frames. Since Cootie is so tall, everybody was like, "We should not do that wide aspect ratio." But I wanted to start with the thing I like and then we can squeeze

everything in. As a result, you see him bending over a lot, and there are many scenes where we're just showing parts of him, and we feel his size through that.

But yeah, we probably employed more puppeteers than any show outside of "Sesame Street." We had a 13-foot puppet that required at least four puppeteers, plus a separate costume person to make it happen each time. Then we had half-scale puppets for the rest of the cast. ... You could do it with CGI, sure, but your eye could tell the difference.

You are the only communist in showbiz. Do you feel more political camaraderie since the WGA and SAG-AFTRA strikes?

Well, if there were more [communists] already, I

wouldn't have gotten into filmmaking. I'm here for a reason. I believe that so much of what I say, a lot of people agree with. You know, I'm a product. I'm not special. I didn't just decide to be virtuous. When I joined radical organizations in the '80s, there were people in those organizations in their 50s, 60s, 70s and 80s. As a teenager, I got connected to this vast history of people that had a lot of experience.

I think there was a lot of unity around the strikes, and then, unfortunately, divisions happened ... everything going on in Gaza.

A couple weeks before Oct. 7, I was on text with Amy Schumer all the time. I had a call with Michael Rapaport about the SAG strike. So there was unity, disunity, people scared. We're taught to be scared, politically and creatively. People are scared of seeming unreasonable or difficult on an artistic level.

Nobody can scare me with that. I never did what I'm doing because I thought it was a good way to make a living. In 2015, I was squatting in a house. ... I was on food stamps while we were making "Sorry to Bother You." But because I have a larger goal, I've been fine with being broke. ☒

➤ Oakland native Boots Riley is an MC, political activist and showrunner of Prime Video comedy series "I'm a Virgo."

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An auteur's fresh take on a timeless scam artist

Steven Zaillian's 'Ripley' is starkly different from previous iterations. That's just how he pictured it.

STEVEN ZAILLIAN'S CHOICE IN WHAT HE WRITES COMES down to two simple questions, as he explains: "Is it interesting to me? Do I think I could do it well?" And in the case of Netflix's "Ripley," his eight-part adaptation of Patricia Highsmith's 1955 novel "The Talented Mr. Ripley," the answer to both was yes. But Zaillian — who often pens meaty tales of men in morally gray areas, including "Gangs of New York," "American Gangster," "Awakenings" and the one that earned him an Oscar in 1994, "Schindler's List" — didn't stop with sole screenwriter credit on "Ripley." He's its director and an executive producer too. Zaillian spoke with The Envelope via Zoom about taking on the equally gray-area Tom Ripley in stark black-and-white ... and one splash of red.

What drew you to Patricia Highsmith's books in the first place?

I gravitate to things that have a kind of timelessness to them. Even if "Ripley" does take place in 1955 or 1960 or whatever, it's a timeless story.

Timeless, though the details might not work in today's world.

At one point, a company I was talking to said, "Yeah, we'd love to make it as long as you make it in the present day." I said, "I can't. This story will not work with cell-phones and all that stuff." That's the reason to keep it in the period. It's a great period: pre-Beatles, pre-Italy being overrun with tourists. But we're always going to have these kinds of people in our lives.

Anthony Minghella's 1999 sun-splashed film "The Talented Mr. Ripley" is almost a diametrically opposed version. Was that intentional?

It was a conscious effort to capture what I imagined it would look like when I first read the book. I just couldn't see this story in color, and I didn't feel that it was a fashion show or a happy, like you said, sunny postcard look. In the book, [Highsmith] spends a good 50 pages describing his life in New York. It felt important for me to establish this guy who's really just a petty criminal, and I had enough time to do that.

It's almost a shame to spend so much time in Italy and not see it in color.

Go back to neorealist films — they're in

black-and-white. "La Dolce Vita" is black-and-white and pretty Italian. Those were the looks of Italy I had in mind.

So had you thought of shooting in — Film? No. I'm not sure in this day and age what the point is of doing that when you can shoot digitally and have that look like film. We recorded in color but never looked at it in color.

There is that moment when the cat walks through blood and leaves behind red marks. Why single that out?

You're in the editing room for a year, and you're playing with things. I said one day, "Know what? Maybe it'd be fun to have the cat paws be the only shot that's in color." There's no hidden meaning. I found it fun.

You directed, wrote and executive produced, as you did on 2016's "The Night of." What's beneficial about having your hands in so many pies?

The biggest benefit of directing something I've written is, whether it turns out good or not, it's what I intended. I'm one of those people who can't write it unless I can see it in my mind. So I've kind of already seen the movie by the time I'm done writing the script. I'm lucky I can do both.

What made Andrew Scott your Ripley?

I'd only seen him in a few things — "Sherlock," "Fleabag" and a movie called "Locke," where he was just a voice on the phone. He created quite a character with

just his voice. I was making something where we were going to be with somebody who's on their own a lot. He has to bring the audience in and have them experience things as he's experiencing them.

He's 47, though; the character in Highsmith's books is in his 20s.

When I cast him, he was 41. I felt the characters should all be about the same age — Dickie, Marge and Tom — and around 35 felt good. If you're 35 and you're a trust-fund kid, I can see your parents getting pretty concerned about your future. With Tom, I felt he's this desperate con-man character, so he needed more history behind him than a 25-year-old would have.

Did you have other actors in mind?

He was the first choice. One and only.

Was including John Malkovich, who played Ripley in 2003's "Ripley's Game," also for fun?

He plays a character who's not even in "The Talented Mr. Ripley," and I found a use for that character in the story and wanted to — if we ever do any more of them — to establish this character in the first one. I told that to John, like, "Can you see that this would be fun and cool?" And he said, "Let's do it." He was just delightful.

So will you make another of Highsmith's Ripley novels?

If [executives] asked me that now, the answer would be no. Will enough time go by where I recover and think about it? Yeah. And if I did it, [Malkovich] would definitely be in it. I want him in it.

What makes Tom Ripley so endlessly fascinating?

Con men are interesting characters and make for good drama. But Tom is much more than that. He's one of the few characters that does bad things that we want to see anyway. ✉

The Contenders
Screenwriter,
Director,
Producer

Story by
Randee Dawn

Photograph by
**Katherine and
Mariel Tyler**
For The Times

↓ Andrew Scott
stars as Tom
Ripley in Netflix
series "Ripley."



His salute to the Greatest Generation

'Masters of the Air' is based on the true story of 'The Bloody 100th' Bomb Group. For **Callum Turner**, it was about honoring the pilots who endured a 'living hell.'

Story by
Jordan Riefe

Photograph by
Shayan
Asgharina
For The Times

↓ Callum Turner says, "We want to remind people what happened. We don't want to make those mistakes again."

WITH A STAGGERING loss rate of 77%, "The Bloody 100th" Bomb Group required 25 missions from its crewmen before they could return home from the horrors of World War II. Every time they got in a plane, they knew that they'd probably die a violent death.

"It's an insane statistic," says Callum Turner. He plays Maj. John "Bucky" Egan in Apple TV+'s "Masters of the Air," a nine-part limited series about the 100th. "The journey they had to go through for the greater good, putting them in the most vulnerable atmosphere ever known to mankind," he says, noting the B-17 bomber's skin was about as thick as a Coke can.

Executive produced by Steven Spielberg, Tom Hanks and Gary Goetzman, the \$250-million series is based on historian Donald L. Miller's book. With "Band of Bro-

thers" and "The Pacific," it forms a glossy trilogy of U.S. military might in WWII. Anchoring a cast of hundreds are Turner and Austin Butler as Gale "Buck" Clevon, both characters based on real-life fliers.

"They were high-flying Hollywood types, the best pilots," Turner says. "They joined up before Pearl Harbor. If a plane went down, Egan would write personal notes to the family because he wanted it to come from someone [the downed flier] knew rather than someone from the Army. For me, the whole journey is about finding the truth and embodying someone who is going through a living hell. It's so important not to just show them as two-dimensional heroes. They're actually men living through something horrific. Finding that truth was about honoring their story."

Egan brings a buzzy energy to the group, Turner says. "He turns up with this cocky attitude and this determination to fight the good fight." It complements Butler's easygoing, internalized performance. "It's well documented they were yin and yang, so it happened naturally. The deeper rooted he was, the more I could fly."

Acting since his early 20s, Turner broke through playing Theseus in 2022's "Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets of Dumbledore," followed by last winter's "The Boys in the Boat," directed by George Clooney. When he and his partner, singer Dua Lipa, aren't being hounded by tabloids, he's in preproduction on "Eternity" with Miles Teller and Elizabeth Olsen. Not bad for a working-class lad from Chelsea.

"It gave me unbelievable drive," he says of being raised by a single mom, a onetime aspiring actor turned nightclub promoter in the 1980s London scene. "I really didn't have anything else. I couldn't *not* succeed. There was a lot of determination, not having any money and working four jobs when I'm 21. I don't know if I had had financial stability behind me, I would have had that drive. That

really was about survival."

Pretty soon he was modeling for Reebok and Burberry. Then came such TV shows as the British miniseries "Glue" and Showtime's "The Borgias."

To play a swaggering Yank like Bucky Egan required countless hours with a dialect coach and maintaining his accent through most of the shoot. Research included documentaries shot by Hollywood heavyweights like George Stevens and John Ford during real combat situations.

He didn't get a chance to talk to many fliers from the war, except at the premiere, where they had five original members of the 100th, all of them centenarians. "We talked to hundreds of veterans," says executive producer Goetzman. "We talked to families. We do this on all of them, 'Band of Brothers,' 'Pacific.' We have a long tradition of that. We get our best stories from them. It teaches you so much."

Some of the 100th went on to fight in Korea, perhaps inspiration for another limited series. "There are still many, many fabulous stories of World War II," Goetzman says. "As far as us, I don't know if we'll ever tackle the multiple-hour limited series again. We might do a movie instead of these series that take three years to do, and they're expensive. The studios probably aren't interested in that length of time of this type of show, either. They want it cheaper, faster."

Isolated on location in Northern England, production was shut down during COVID-19. The series took 10 months to shoot, and although it's a fondly remembered experience, Turner is glad it's over. The worst of it was COVID, and the best was the climactic scene at the prison camp, when the allies begin bombing and the inmates see their Nazi guards on the run. That's when Bucky climbs atop a building and replaces the Nazi flag with the Stars and Stripes.

"As an actor, that sequence is really wonderful. We shot it right at the end, and there was a sort of a parallel in what I was going through myself, because we were coming to the end of this thing and we'd made it." He pauses, collecting himself. "There aren't many people left who lived it. We want to remind people what happened. We don't want to make those mistakes ever again." ✉





Black Twitter: more than hashtags and memes

Besides examining the social media subculture, Hulu docuseries marks a new phase for **Prentice Penny**.

YOU'VE PROBABLY HEARD or read these phrases somewhere: "Oscars So White," "Me Too," "Say Her Name," "Black Girl Magic," "Black Lives Matter." They've all become part of the national lexicon. What you may not know, or have forgotten, is that they originated on an area of social media that included smart, informed reactions from Black celebrities, authors, journalists and just about anyone with a voice. It was called Black Twitter.

Now that Twitter is called X and has lost its luster (plus many of its users), former "Insecure" showrunner Prentice Penny and Wired writer Jason Parham have teamed up as executive producers to

document those times in Hulu's three-part docuseries "Black Twitter: A People's History." A time capsule of sorts, the series looks at what it meant to those coining phrases and having discussions in 140 characters or less. For Penny, it's the first project in a deal with Hulu's Onyx Collective, and a whole new direction for him.

"It was really wanting something, a few things," Penny says: "One, it was me wanting whatever I did next not to be compared to 'Insecure.' I felt I had just done something really special and kind of hit a peak of a mountain, and I didn't want whatever I did next to actually be like, 'Oh, well, that's not 'Insecure.'" And I also wanted to break creatively. I've been doing scripted television, specifically in the half-

hour space, since [2004]. So I'd been doing it at that point for 17 years. And I want to be scared again. And that's how 'Insecure' made me feel. It made me feel creatively inspired again. And I wanted whatever I did next to come from that place."

Penny cut his teeth as a writer-in-training on the UPN series "Girlfriends." Other shows he's worked on include "The Hustle" and "Brooklyn Nine-Nine." He'd also been a co-producer on "Scrubs."

The inspiration to switch to documentary was inspired by his idol, Spike Lee. "You know, watching him diversify his own [work], not just being a narrative filmmaker but having done documentary film, stuff like 'When the Levees Broke' and '4 Little Girls.' It felt like a really good line of demarcation for me of one phase of my career to another. And I'm a big fan of Black Twitter. I engage in it. I love it."

The angle of Parham's three-part article was how much the internet changes. By the time Parham and Penny teamed up to do the docuseries, things had changed again. "He was referencing things like Vine and Friendster and spaces like that," Penny says. "He was like, 'This felt like the right time to document what we had done on the platform.' And obviously, we didn't know how prophetic it would be that while we were making it, Elon [Musk] would buy the platform and so many things would change as a result, but that's really what was inspirational to me, to be like, 'Yeah, we should be telling this story.'"

Among the Black Twitter regulars featured in the docuseries are actor-comedian Amanda Seales, New York Times contributor and author Roxane Gay, Emmy-winning sports journalist Jemele Hill, comedian W. Kamau Bell ("We Need to Talk About Cosby"), creative consultant April Reign (#OscarsSoWhite), TV producer Baratunde Thurston ("The Daily Show With Trevor Noah") and vlogger Kid Fury.

Yet the series has been criticized by some on social media who say celebrities and well-known artists are not part of mainstream Black Twitter.

"When you're marketing a doc, you're marketing the names that people know, but that's not all we have," Penny says. "That was one of the things that was super important to me. So many things that happened in the time of Black Twitter were just people commenting on something, like CaShawn Thompson, who came up with the tag 'Black Girl Magic.'"

"And she wasn't starting it to start a hashtag. She was just responding to all the criticism that Black women were getting online about their appearance. She [said], 'I don't know what they're talking about, but Black girls are magic.' So, for me, having people like that in the doc is just as important as anybody else." ✉

The Contenders
Producer

Story by
Diedre
Johnson

➔ **Prentice Penny says he was inspired by Spike Lee to move into documentary filmmaking.**

Weddings and funerals bring an end to 'Crown'

Executive producer **Suzanne Mackie** reveals how the Netflix period drama gave Queen Elizabeth II a royal sendoff.

Stories by
Gary Goldstein

SUZANNE MACKIE, AN executive producer for the entire six-season run of "The Crown," has pretty much seen it all working side by side with Peter Morgan, the creator and chief writer of the much-lauded Netflix drama, which aired its 60th and final episode in December. ¶ The series, winner of 10 Emmys out of 28 nominations so far, was set mainly from 1947 to 2005 and followed the trials and tribulations of the British royal family, led by Queen Elizabeth II. Its jam-packed closing season included the death of Princess Diana, the passing of Princess Margaret, the Queen Mother's death at 101, the early romance between Prince William and Kate Middleton, Queen Elizabeth's Golden Jubilee celebration and the marriage of Prince Charles to Camilla Parker Bowles. And if that wasn't enough, the real-life Queen Elizabeth II died while the show's last episodes were being shot. ¶ "We discussed a lot what would happen if the queen passes away during the time of us making 'The Crown,'" said Mackie in a Zoom interview from her London home. "And when it actually happened, of course, none of us were quite prepared for how we would react and what it would influence." ¶ Mackie went on to chat with The Envelope, in eloquent detail, about the show's elliptical addressing of the queen's death, its occasional use of artistic license and the series' trajectory from its first to last seasons.

From the start, did you have any idea how long the series would run?

You never know whether you're going to

get all the way to six seasons ... but we always knew we wanted to span the queen's reign and take it up to 2005. Pretty much right from the beginning, Peter Morgan mapped out the six seasons in very broad brushstrokes. He really figured out the architecture, which I remember then being incredibly impressed with. And if I look back at the architecture, of course, some things would have changed, but generally, he stuck with the plan.

How was it determined how far to go chronologically?

It felt like, in many ways, the story found its

[own] endpoint. Peter doesn't tend to like to write into something that's still evolving. For him, he has to have a sort of historical perspective on [a story]. He has to step back and really see it. With all the complexity and nuance his writing has, I think he feels he needs that sort of distance. That's why we chose 2005 as our endpoint.

With that in mind, how was the final season structured?

[For] the first four episodes to be about Diana and what happened to her and the decision to tell that story in quite forensic detail — a lot of detail, by the way, that I think

→ Imelda Staunton, right center, with Olivia Colman, left, and Claire Foy as Queen Elizabeth II in "The Crown." Executive producer Suzanne Mackie.



NETFLIX; JEFF SPICER GETTY IMAGES

a lot of people didn't know about or understand. And then for the second half, from Episode 5 to the end, to recalibrate around the queen again and, obviously, to have the sense of [Diana's] death and what that did, that seismic shift for the family, but for it then to return to Elizabeth and the future.

Can you talk about the final episode in which Elizabeth plans her funeral?

Had it already been written when the queen died?

It had been written, absolutely, but then became influenced, of course, by her passing, but also by the notion there was one simple new element that changed the course of the episode.

The story remained the same — Prince Charles and Camilla marry and the queen finally accepts Camilla publicly — and that felt like the natural end of our journey. But when she passed away, I think it was [episode director] Stephen Daldry who suggested the idea that the queen might be having a rehearsal for her own funeral, which we know she did on more than one occasion, by the way, and very rigorously. This felt like, for us, a tribute to her and allowed us to play with the sense of something a little more portentous without being opportunistic.

That idea of her planning her own funeral suddenly felt like a really beautiful thing to do. And out of that came a sense that we might see the previous iterations of the queen in Claire Foy and Olivia Colman. It felt somehow within the grammar of what we've always done, which is invoking the past and invoking the future.

It must be a challenge to sustain a series of such dimension and magnitude without taking at least some creative liberties. What were some of the instances of that this season?

It's a very, very meticulously researched show, it always has been from Day 1. ... I suppose, of course, there were the fantasy scenes, like showing the three queens [in the final episode]. And always the private conversations that we can only imagine might have taken place. I think the engagement — Dodi Fayed's proposal to Diana — was obviously, to an extent, conjecture on our part. We know Dodi bought a ring just before the fatal crash and we knew that the ring was from the "Dis-Moi Oui" ["Tell me yes"] range.

What took place behind each door, in each room, that final journey, those final 24 hours, we were having to imagine. We were having to build a story. And I remember Peter saying, "I have to have a point of view. I have to have a story that I have to stick to." And it would be his truth. But it was borne out of deep respect for them as characters. ☒

ELIZABETH DEBICKI TAPS INTO DIANA'S WIT

The actor brought a sense of humanity to her portrayal of the much beloved and heavily scrutinized late royal.

PLAYING AN INTERNATIONAL ICON WITH UTTER AUTHENTICITY CAN BE A DAUNTING task. But Elizabeth Debicki's depiction of Diana, Princess of Wales, in Seasons 5 and 6 of "The Crown" (following Emma Corrin's turn as the younger Diana in Season 4) proved an impeccable re-creation of the ill-fated icon's roller-coaster life from 1990 to 1997. The Paris-born, Australia-raised Debicki, who has received both a Golden Globe and an Emmy nomination for the part, recently spoke from London via Zoom about inhabiting one of the world's most revered and influential role models.

The script and actual events aside, how did you prepare to transition from the Diana of Season 5 to 6?

I had changed so much between the two seasons; my approach had changed significantly. [At the end of Season 5], I was a very tired and had-a-lot-of-sadness-in-me Diana. But my experience as an actor inside of the work in Season 6 was really much more fruitful in a way, like I was able to find more and trust it more. [Showrunner Peter Morgan] said to me a long time ago, "I think the experience on 'The Crown' is that everybody has a lovely time on their second season because they're not as scared anymore, basically."

How do you approach playing such a beloved real-life figure? There's so much more on the line, yes?

Usually, as an actor, when you read a script and you create a character, you are the authority on that person. This was lending pieces of myself to try and imbue Peter's version of her with the things I personally felt I could feel from this person after much research and conversations with people.

It was kind of a multilayered experience, as actually a lot of "The Crown" is — you're both inside of it but also observing it in a pretty unique way. It was essential to me that there was more joy and more lightness and a real intention to release some of what you'd already seen the character go through. To try and find fresh air, to try and find fresh connection with people and to let that kind of fill a very empty cup.

Through your portrayal, what did



you feel was your responsibility to Diana's memory?

A lot of my research in the early days was watching footage of the real Princess Diana. I found her so mesmerizing and so funny and sharp and human and moving. That's why people's interactions with her felt so poignant and stayed with them their entire lives — they felt that they'd come into contact not only with a princess but a real human. It felt like if I could get anywhere near giving a version of that to an audience then that is my responsibility.

What did you discover about Diana by playing her that you never knew or maybe even imagined?

The origin of her behaviors was surprising to me. Apart from that real sense of humor, [there was] her self-awareness and wit and a real will to draw joy into your life when, in fact, you're a part of a system that can enforce [the rules]. She found her ways of resistance that I think [are] kind of radical. She was really marching to a beat of her own a lot of the time and that was very brave. I don't think I really realized the forces that were against her doing a lot of that.

The 'aggressive originality' that guides 'Palm Royale'

Showrunner **Abe Sylvia** and star **Kristen Wiig** explain why viewers will identify with the financially poor but rich-in-spirit social climber at the heart of the 1960s-set Peacock comedy.

Story by
Jordan Riefe

Photograph by
Kurt Iswarlenko
For The Times

KRISTEN WIIG, CAROL Burnett, Allison Janney, Laura Dern. These are just a few of the powerhouse names at the core of Apple

TV+'s wiggly comedy series "Palm Royale." "These things do become a bit of an avalanche where people want to go to the party," showrunner Abe Sylvia says with a laugh. "Once we had Kristen Wiig and Laura Dern at the top of our call sheet, it gets attention right away."

The show is based on the novel "Mr. & Mrs. American Pie" by Juliet McDaniel, about a social climber in midcentury Palm Springs. Sylvia reimagined the story in Palm Beach, Fla., and broadened the material to accommodate enough dramatic possibilities for an open-ended series. Laura Dern and Jayme Lemons' Jaywalker Pictures developed it as a vehicle for Dern. But due to other commitments, Dern took the supporting role of political activist heiress Linda Shaw.

Instead, Wiig takes center stage as Maxine Simmons, an ambitious social climber in the rarefied Palm Beach society. Membership at the Palm Royale is de rigueur, and once inside, Maxine claws her way to the top of society while hiding her secret poverty. It's a problem that will solve itself, she assumes, when her catatonic aunt-in-law, former society dame Norma Dellacorte (Burnett), finally kicks the bucket.

"The thought of Carol, in the beginning,

was a little intimidating for me because she inspired me so much," recalls Wiig about working with the impressively spry 90-year-old comic legend. "With her show, I was introduced to sketch comedy. And as a woman having her own show at that time, she's just a legend. But as soon as you meet her, she's so warm and makes everyone feel comfortable. Being on set and doing a scene with Carol Burnett, I kind of never got used to that."

At the Palm Royale, everyone hates everyone, but everyone needs allies. Maxine's allies are a gay pool boy (Ricky Martin), her (philandering) airline pilot husband (Josh Lucas) and his aunt, who at one point pushes her off a yacht in the middle of the ocean. But not before Maxine sings a song to a beached whale, calling it back into the sea. The whale pays a visit to thank her but cannot rescue her. That job is left to a nearby astronaut because, y'know, Apollo 11. But will the astronaut accept her invitation to the social event of the season? Indeed, he will. Not only that, but he'll bring President Nixon with him.

Such is the logic of a show determined not to be predictable. "What people are craving is aggressive originality right now, something that doesn't look and feel like something we've seen before," Sylvia says. "As a gay filmmaker, queer cinema is often a pastiche. We recycle pop culture through our personal lens, and it comes out and makes this new thing. You don't see a lot of it in American cinema. The show is sort of Almodóvar-ian. It's melodrama, then it's comedy, then it's a drama and then it's a thriller, then it's soap."

Amid all the toxic posturing around the pool at the Palm Royale, the turbulence of the era barely registers. An inspiration for the look of the show was Slim Aarons' mid-century Palm Springs photos of what he called "beautiful people doing beautiful things in beautiful places."

"This idea that all of these people in society are keeping the real world at bay," Sylvia says. "You have no idea, looking at these photographs, that the Vietnam War

↓ Kristen Wiig and Ricky Martin in "Palm Royale." Showrunner Abe Sylvia and Wiig, opposite.



BETH DUBBER APPLE TV+



is raging and cities are burning because of civil rights riots and the quest for equality. And these people are just looking gorgeous, like, 'What world out there?'"

So why would audiences care about a liar and cheater desperate to gain acceptance among horrible elitists at an exclusive club? Maxine is an underdog and a disruptor in the tradition of the Marx Brothers and Charlie Chaplin and, like the latter, does it with utter sincerity.

"She believes in herself and she's never embarrassed," says Wiig, who was drawn to the show's mix of absurdist comedy and emotional drama. "If that person is being sunny and positive, I think the fact that she is ultimately wanting this so badly from her heart, and she's so energetic, there's something infectious about that."

Highlighting her dramatic chops against broad comedy, "Palm Royale's" tricky tone allowed Wiig to take big swings, something she did co-writing and starring in "Bridesmaids," and something she does in life. While attending the University of Arizona, where she went to become an art teacher, she dropped out after one acting class and headed to L.A. to become an actor.

"I was a little lost, as most of us are in your 20s, and I didn't really know what I was doing. There was something sort of pulling me that I couldn't ignore," she says of a gamble that paid off after she joined the Groundlings, where she honed her improv skills in the 1990s. Eventually, she joined the cast of "Saturday Night Live" from 2005-12. Since leaving the show, she has often been back to host, joining the Five-Timers Club early this spring with Paul Rudd, Martin Short, Jon Hamm, Matt Damon, Will Forte, Fred Armisen and Ryan Gosling on hand to honor her.

"It was honestly a very special night for me. I won't ever forget it. It was one of the best weeks of my life. It was also just so fun. I love going back. You're bonded for life after that show. I even feel a bond with the cast I just spent that week with," Wiig says. "It was my dream to be on the show. You're in New York, you have the greatest job in the world. With my group, you're basically living at 30 Rock. So those people are my family forever. It was very difficult to leave. I just knew it was time, and it was one of those things. I just took a leap. And I always knew I could come back."

But right now she's not looking back. She and Sylvia are looking forward to Season 2 of "Palm Royale." "I will direct at some point in my life. I don't know what it's going to be; we've talked about the show. I just have to find the right thing. It's definitely something I've wanted to do for a long time," Wiig says. "I do like doing it all." ✉

' Fargo ' creator asks, what ever happened to good manners?

Noah Hawley says Season 5 wrestles with decline in 'Minnesota nice' and attacks on women's rights, but he still sees decency.

Story By
Hugh Hart

Photograph by
Dania Maxwell

BY HIS OWN COUNT, WRITER-director Noah Hawley has generated 51 hours of off-kilter TV drama inspired by the Coen brothers' 1996 movie "Fargo." An astute wordsmith who writes novels in between TV shows, the Austin, Texas-based creator and showrunner excels in telling faux true-crime stories from the heartland populated with dead bodies, homespun wit and morally conflicted characters. Since its launch in 2014, "Fargo," the series, has earned 55 Emmy nominations and six wins. ¶ For "Fargo's" fifth season on FX, Hawley and his team meted out their usual allotment of black-humored touches, including an eye-patched lawyer named Danish Graves (Dave Foley), puppets, a "Home Alone"-like sequence involving flamethrowing oven cleaner, body-switching slapstick at the hospital and a villain who rises naked from a hot tub to ask visiting police officers, "Does it bother you if I'm discussing matters of state in moist repose?" ¶ The show also hit somber notes in tracking the hero's journey of Minnesota housewife Dot Lyons (Juno Temple) as she fights to be free of her brutally misogynistic ex-husband, North Dakota Sheriff Roy Tillman (Jon Hamm). ¶ Hawley recently returned from Thailand, where he's overseeing production of a new "Alien" series based on the sci-fi film franchise. Speaking via Zoom from a Beverly Hills hotel room, Hawley explains how he built this year's "Fargo" saga around themes of domestic abuse, debt and biscuit batter.

Season 5 takes place in 2019, making it your most contemporary "Fargo" story to date. What did you have on your mind while writing in 2022?

The story landed in a moment in which we were moving backward in the fight for women's rights and the presidency we had endured and all of that, so [I wanted] to create Dot as this character who just didn't put up with it. There's a Ruth Bader Ginsburg quote that goes, "We're not asking for special treatment. We're just ask-

ing to take your boots off our necks." I think people have responded to the show because Dot was not a victim. She was resourceful, creative, she made breakfast for her kid, but she was just like, "No, you're not going to treat me that way."

Dot's whisking biscuit batter at the end of Episode 1, pretending to her husband and daughter that everything's fine after she Maced a police officer at a PTA meeting gone wild, burned a man's face with a homemade flamethrower and survived a bloody shootout. Still, she's trying hard to be "Minnesota nice."

The Coens coined the "Minnesota nice" phrase as this idea of a polite society where it's: Keep smiling, keep smiling, keep smiling, and then somebody's dead, right? But in 2022, I looked around, and I was like: "I think people [have] stopped smiling." We're in this situation [now] where the basically decent people that we have been championing on this show are suddenly following the school president to the parking lot and threatening to kill them. But decent people still exist and the sense of civility — how are we going to get back to that from where we've ended up? That's really what the show wrestles with.

The battle between Dot Lyon and Sheriff Roy Tillman is investigated by Indira (Richa Moorjani), the local deputy who's saddled with debt. Why was it important to incorporate debt as a Season 5 theme?

Because I feel like it's something that everyone has and no one talks about. It's such a crushing element in so many people's lives. The ugly side of the American Dream is that we pass moral judgment on people for not being rich.

Jennifer Jason Leigh plays Dot's imperious mother-in-law, the millionaire debt-collection mogul Lorraine. She forgives the debt of three men so they'll change their names to Roy Tillman. They all show up at a campaign debate and humiliate the real Roy Tillman. How did you come up with that dirty trick?

Honestly, that idea came out of Russia. They do the craziest s— over there. I saw a story where, in order to beat the opposition party leader in this town, they got two guys to change their names to his name so when people go to vote, they only have a 30% chance of voting for the right one.

You're kidding!

Not only is it a real thing, someone in the U.S. just did that in a congressional race; they had people change their names. [With "Fargo"] I thought for this self-important man to show up at a debate and then become a laughingstock — it felt like justice. ✉





do you miss about it?

PAULINA ALEXIS Oklahoma is so beautiful. They have the best sunsets. The people are the nicest.

DEVERY JACOBS The Black, brown and Native folks there are so resilient and have been through so much.

Paulina, you were the only actor permitted to go off script. Explain.

ALEXIS I don't know exactly how to explain it. But Willie Jack? Anything she'd say, I'd say. Even in the auditions, I changed the way I'd read it because it just wouldn't roll off my tongue. I think that's what got me the role. My brothers are all really talented, really funny. Growing up with them taught me improv. The best advice they gave me was, "If you're going to say things, just say them." When you're acting, it's too performative. It takes away the naturalness.

JACOBS Her improv skills are unmatched.

Devery, talk about joining the writers' room in the second season.

JACOBS In comedies, a lot of times you see these characters who don't grow, where it's kind of the same thing for them in every episode. One of the beautiful things about "Rez Dogs" is that we see evolutions of these characters and of this community.

Paulina, you always said that Willie Jack should be that girl on every rez, the one with the baseball cap and the braids.

ALEXIS The show means a lot to not just me but to Natives across America, Canada. Growing up, you don't see Native people on TV. [Pauses] Well, I've seen Native people on TV, but they're not accurately how we are. So I wanted to bring that to life. It really hit home when people started reaching out to me saying that they never saw anyone on TV that looked like them until they saw me. That meant a lot because that used to be me.

What's a trope about Indigenous people that you hope to never see on TV ever again?

JACOBS Anything remotely resembling a Pocahontas stereotype. I remember telling my agent, "If I'm ever going to have a sex scene, my bottom line is it can't be in buckskin or on a bed of furs." I want to be portrayed as the modern people we are.

What was especially difficult about the end of "Reservation Dogs"?

JACOBS There was still a crack in the door open, that the show might continue. And then the writers' [and actors'] strike[s] happened. It felt like it [ended] without us really knowing and that we were robbed of the opportunity for all of us to let this story go at the same time. ☔

Story By
Margy Rochlin

Photograph by
Jane Kim
For The Times

Hard to say goodbye for these 'Reservation Dogs'

Stars **Devery Jacobs** and **Paulina Alexis** on shooting in Oklahoma, improvisation and bidding farewell.

BEFORE SHE'D FILMED A single frame of "Reservation Dogs," the funny, soulful FX series about four Indigenous teenagers in rural Oklahoma, Paulina Alexis, who plays fan favorite Willie Jack, was sure it'd be a hit. "That was just the vibe [the pilot script] gave off," says Alexis, who grew up on the Alexis Nakota Sioux First Nation reserve in Alberta, Canada. "It was just kids doing regular rez kid stuff. I knew it was going to blow up." ❖ Alexis joined castmate Devery Jacobs, who was raised in Kahnawake Mohawk Territory and played rez dog Elora Danan, to excavate some "Reservation Dogs" memories — including the fluctu-

ating extremes of Oklahoma weather. "We filmed during tornado season," says Jacobs, who also wrote and directed for the show. "It'd be freezing, and then the same day it'd be boiling, sweltering hot. It's very intense. But Sterlin [Harjo, the series' showrunner] wanted to set this story where he's from, and you can feel that. I don't think we could fake it if it was anywhere else." ❖ Although it was the first series created, produced and written by and starring Indigenous people — and it's 99% Fresh on Rotten Tomatoes — Harjo decided the time to end it was after three seasons.

Much of "Reservation Dogs" was shot in tiny Okmulgee, Okla. What

➤ Devery Jacobs, left, and Paulina Alexis starred in "Reservation Dogs," which recently ended.

E W A N
MCGREGOR

FOR 'A
GENTLEMAN IN
MOSCOW,' THE
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BUT THE ROLE
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WOULDN'T

STORY
BY
GLENN WHIPP

S H A V E
O F F

ANY
YEARS.

T H A T
M U S T A C H E ?

PHOTOGRAPHS
BY
JASON ARMOND

A N O T H E R
S T O R Y .



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MCGREGOR IS SWIPING THROUGH HIS CAMERA ROLL, LOOKING FOR THE PICTURE THAT explains why he will never grow another mustache — unless a job requires it. And even then, he'd probably argue that the character should be clean-shaven. Dalí without a mustache? Surreal. ¶ Before our conversation, I had resolved not to ask McGregor anything about facial hair. It seems that most of the interviews he's done to promote his terrific Paramount+ With Showtime limited series "A Gentleman in Moscow" have spent an inordinate amount of time focusing on the mustache he grew to play Count Alexander Ilyich Rostov, a Russian nobleman sentenced to house arrest in a luxurious hotel following the 1917 revolution. Over four decades (and eight episodes), the good gentleman learns to let go of formalities and appreciate simple pleasures and embrace family. ¶ But he never shaves off that damn mustache. ¶ McGregor keeps scrolling. He's in Atlanta, shooting "Flowervale Street," a movie so secret that when he mentions its name, he immediately panics. "Oh, no. I'm worried that I just blew the title." When I tell him it's out there, he's relieved. He wrapped shooting at 6:30 this morning, and here he is with me on Zoom, 4½ hours later. "I'm somewhat upside down, but it's all good," he says. ¶ And he's not that out of it, because when I tell him all I know about "Flowervale Street" is that David Robert Mitchell ("It Follows," "Under the Silver Lake") wrote and directed it, and it's a mystery, and it might be set in the 1980s, and it might have dinosaurs, he says, smiling: ¶ "Well, I'm not at liberty to discuss that in any way, so it could be in the '70s with, you know, rodents. But it's great fun."

He finds the photo. He's with his son, Laurie, who was just shy of 3 when it was taken. McGregor's hair is light brown. His mustache is blond. He grimaces, saying, "There's something about my blondie mustache that doesn't look good on my face." The picture was taken last year during the actors' strike, which interrupted the filming of "A Gentleman in Moscow" with eight days remaining on the schedule. During the break, McGregor kept the mustache, grew a beard and waited. When shooting resumed in January, he finished his scenes and shaved it all off five minutes after production wrapped.

"There's me in the makeup chair," McGregor says with glee, finding another shot in his camera roll.

"I'm getting the feeling you're never growing a mustache—"

"... again," he interrupts, finishing my sentence. "Once it goes white, maybe. Then I think it might look good. Like, for instance, you'd look great with a mustache." Which is funny because the last time I grew a beard, my kids, then little, called me Obi-Wan.

"There are worse things they could call you, believe me," McGregor says, laughing.

McGregor played Obi-Wan Kenobi in the three "Star Wars" prequels and returned to the role for the 2022 Disney+ limited series. Shortly before we spoke, he surprised fans attending a 25th-anniversary showing of "The Phantom Menace" at the Atlanta Film Festival. He likes doing





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**THE EXPERIENCE OF
MAKING THIS SHOW
IS WHY I WANTED
TO BE AN ACTOR.**

”

**EWAN MCGREGOR
ON 'A GENTLEMAN
IN MOSCOW'**





these kinds of drop-ins. A few years ago, he showed up at the El Capitan in Hollywood at 2 in the morning between films in a “Star Wars” marathon.

“They’re all in sleeping bags and blankets,” McGregor says. “It’s a good laugh. And it’s good for the ego when they give you a big cheer when they weren’t expecting you.”

Critics mostly hated “The Phantom Menace” when it was released, but the George Lucas-directed movie has been reassessed as the years have passed.

“We made the film for kids, but we didn’t hear from them then because they were kids and there was no Instagram, no social media. They didn’t have a voice like they do now,” McGregor says. “All we had was the critics and the noise of the people who didn’t like it. But those kids have grown up, and those movies are now their ‘Star Wars’ trilogy. It’s nice for me, that. Because at the time, the reaction was rough.”

We get to talking about the idea, explored in “A Gentleman in Moscow,” that less is more and the contentment that comes from casting aside what no longer serves us.

“You realize what things are not you,” McGregor says. “I’m 53. But I’ve got lots of friends who are about to be 60. And I keep noticing, watching shows on television, young people referencing 60 like it’s really old!” He stops, laughing. “You’re like, ‘Wait a minute.’ But it’s also learning about who you are, isn’t it? And you let go of the things that you don’t need.”

The funny thing about McGregor,

though, is that he’s someone who picks up hobbies quickly, becomes obsessed with them and then moves on to the next thing, never quite letting them go. He can ride a unicycle. He can play the guitar. He can blow a few tunes on the bagpipes. There’s always something going on. It used to be that he’d beat himself up over knowing how to do a lot of things moderately well as opposed to mastering a single talent. Now he just accepts that’s how he is. He can go out to his shed, look at the unicycle he hasn’t used for three years and know that someday he’ll give it another go.

“What about the bagpipes?” I ask. “Are they in the corner somewhere, gathering dust?”

“They are at the moment,” McGregor says. “But they will get blown again.”

It turns out McGregor is even more interested in talking about the bagpipes than about his “Moscow” mustache. It wasn’t that long ago, in fact, that he broke out his bagpipes. This last year, he was in his native Scotland for Hogmanay, the country’s new year celebration. He was out with his brother, who repeatedly called out for songs that McGregor didn’t know. “C’mon, shut up. I don’t know that one,” McGregor kept telling him.

When he was a kid, McGregor was a drummer in a pipe band. He never thought he’d be a piper because as a drummer, that would be, in his words, “going over to the dark side.” But when he was shooting the 2011 film “Salmon Fishing in the Yemen” in the Scottish Highlands, he met a piper and, inspired by being home, bought some bagpipes and found a teacher in London. He took the pipes with him to the set of his next film — he won’t name it, but it was a “miserable” experience (“f— slow, like I was under house arrest”) — and asked the transport guy to put his trailer next to the generator.

“I’m the first actor in history to ask that, because usually you want to be as far away from the generator as possible because it’s so noisy,” McGregor says. “But it was perfect because I could blow my bagpipes for hours on end and no one could hear it because I was next to the drone of the generator.”

Hearing these stories, it’s easy to see why McGregor loved “A Gentleman in Moscow,” a series that asked him to learn how to do a number of different things — age a character over decades, play a father and a lover, explore the inner life of a man well versed in grief and loss who never loses his zest for life.

“The experience of making this show is why I wanted to be an actor,” McGregor says. “It’s such a beautiful piece; it leaves you thinking, ‘God, I hope there’s another one out there somewhere in the future.’ But who knows?”

“He’s so charming, but I resist using that word because it’s reductive,” says “Moscow” showrunner Ben Vanstone. “There’s so much thought and skill that goes into his performance, all of his performances, really.”

Vanstone says McGregor’s count ages 31 years in the series, not including what we see of the character in childhood flashbacks. But because the character’s mental burdens grow lighter over time, McGregor believes he becomes more relaxed and, in many ways, younger. He learns to live.

Circling back to what he said earlier about young people calling his friends almost ancient at 60, I ask McGregor how old he feels these days.

“I feel 53. I feel exactly where I am,” he replies. “I don’t want to be 35. I want to feel the age that I am.”

Is that because, I ask — adding that I’ve known him for so long now, almost an entire hour, so I can presume some insight — he wouldn’t trade the wisdom and experiences he’s accumulated to shave off a few years?

“No, I wouldn’t,” McGregor says. “I’m not afraid of aging. I’m not afraid of getting older. I’m not afraid of dying. I’m just so happy. I’m a lucky, lucky man.” ☒

←EWAN
McGREGOR AS
COUNT
ROSTOV IN
“A GENTLEMAN
IN MOSCOW.”



theSpotlight

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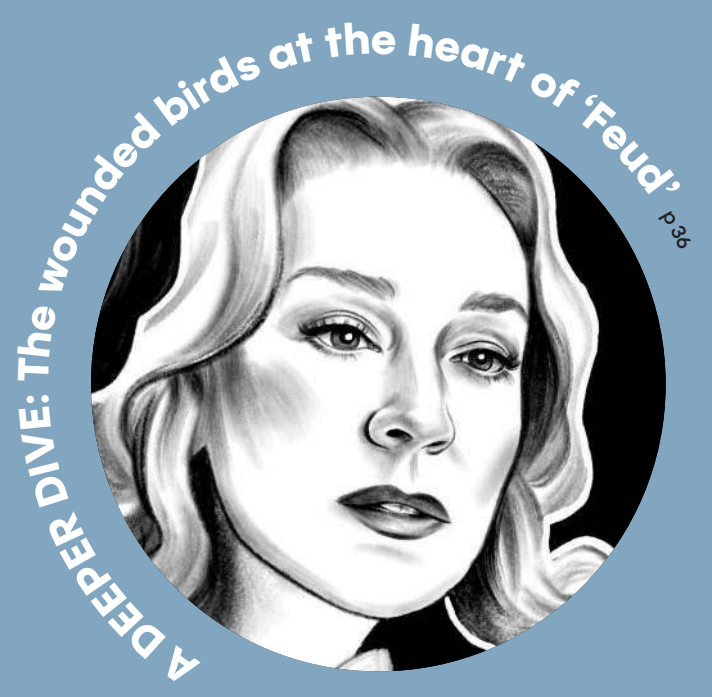
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Illustration by
Jaya Nicely
For The Times



Behind the scenes with the wounded women of 'Feud: Capote vs. the Swans'

Truman Capote may have ruffled their feathers onscreen, but this elegant ensemble still had a ball making the **Ryan Murphy** series.

Story by
Daniel
Vaillancourt

Illustration by
Jaya Nicely
For The Times

I KNEW THERE WERE GREAT actresses of these ages who were going to surprise everybody," says three-time Emmy-winning casting director Alexa L. Fogel of assembling seven icons for Ryan Murphy and Jon Robin Baitz's "Feud: Capote vs. the Swans," based on Laurence Leamer's bestseller "Capote's Women." "One of Ryan's true gifts is that he sees what people are capable of and has the ability to make it happen." ¶ The Envelope interviewed the flock of feathered friends splashing around Tom Hollander's titular Capote in the FX limited series.

Why did you want this role?

CALISTA FLOCKHART (LEE RADZIWIŁŁ) I really wanted to be in a Ryan Murphy show. Ryan has such a clear and specific vision. He is enormously talented. He is also a lot of fun. And interesting. And singular.

DIANE LANE (NANCY "SLIM" KEITH) When Ryan Murphy essentially cold-called me and said Jon Robin Baitz was the writer, I realized how exposed I had already been to his talent, his gifts, his passion for truly interior and external world-building writing. I thought, "This is such a gift!" It was one of those offers you can't refuse.

DEMI MOORE (ANN WOODWARD) I don't think Ann Woodward was ever really fully accepted as a swan. She's such a tragic character. And yet, in a way, held the guts and the heart of the whole betrayal.

CHLOË SEVIGNY (C.Z. GUEST) I rarely have an opportunity to play someone who is this refined. ... She reminded me of my mother, who has a lot of restraint. She's holding on to a lot of old-fashioned values. She believes in mystery and manners, and she always wants to see me in films that have more of those kinds of attributes.

NAOMI WATTS (BABE PALEY) I did a deep dive into Babe and saw this wonderfully complex character: a woman who was in a marriage that was causing her a great deal of pain but who still

managed to be so graceful and dignified.

What did you know of Capote and his swans prior to jumping in?

FLOCKHART I knew very little. I had a vague notion of some sort of juicy scandal. I was surprised to learn of all the heartache that was involved.

JESSICA LANGE (CAPOTE'S MOTHER, LIL- LIE MAE FAULK) Well, I knew of Capote, certainly. I'd read his work. But I didn't know about the swans. That's not something that ever interested me — the high society of New York City at that time.

MOLLY RINGWALD (JOANNE CARSON) I was very familiar with the story of the swans, [the restaurant] La Côte Basque, all of those women and the feud. I always wondered, "Why isn't somebody making this movie?" When I heard Ryan was going to make it, I was really excited just to be able to see it. And then when I was approached to be in it, even better!

What was the greatest joy of this project?

FLOCKHART Working with such great talent, starting with [director] Gus Van Sant. I mean, come on.

LANE The feeling that we were in this play together, because as it went on and we were joining each other at the table so often in La Côte Basque, it felt like a theater set for us in the sense of, "Well, this is today's performance." Have you ever seen birds in a cage when they start sharing their little seeds with each other? Beak to beak, almost like a kiss. That's how we felt. That's how I felt, anyway. Lovebirds in a cage.

LANGE Certainly, working with Tom, who was wonderful. Filming here in New York was great. And also, shooting the Black and White Ball. That was a lot of fun. I'm just sorry I didn't get to play with any of the other actresses.

The greatest challenge?

FLOCKHART It was challenging working with Robbie [Baitz]. He made me laugh

too hard and too much, and I would forget to focus. *Very unprofessional.*

LANGE Playing someone who exists only in Capote's mind. I mean, his mother was a real person, but there wasn't a lot written about her. In this piece, she's a ghost. And playing a ghost — I've done that before — isn't the easiest thing. [Laughs]

WATTS The smoking was tough. She was a heavy smoker, so it felt like I smoked 200 herbal cigarettes a day on set! I had to learn how to speak with fake teeth, which felt very strange and added to the difficulty in finding the character's voice. Also, I wore colored contacts for the role, and that created a barrier for me.

What was your most difficult scene to shoot?

MOORE [Truman and Ann] outside in the freezing cold when he's by the water's edge, and I'm in the veil in that kind of ghostly apparition. It being so stylized, and it being so cold that snot was running down my face. That was difficult on a physical level. On an emotional level, the scene where I crashed the party, because it felt so painful. The discomfort of being with your son and being outwardly rejected.

RINGWALD Trying to pull Truman out of the swimming pool. ... When somebody is playing unconscious, they really can't help you at all. I was literally trying to drag him out with all my clothes on, all this hair that's not mine [laughs] that got really heavy when it was wet.

SEVIGNY There was a scene where I don't say anything. Truman is reading a tribute to Babe, and then I have to start breaking down. That was really emotional because it was actually the anniversary of the day I had lost a friend, so I was already feeling very heightened emotionally about friendships and loss.

Are any of the figures portrayed someone you'd want to know today?

FLOCKHART Oh, God. No one. Let's keep it 'SWANS,' PAGE 40



Los Angeles Times

HOLLYWOOD, HERE SHE COMES!

New AMERICA'S SCREAM QUEEN

MAXINE MINX
IS CAST IN
ELIZABETH BENDER'S
'THE PURITAN II'

MAXINE MINX



NOW A MAJOR MOTION
PICTURE FRANCHISE!

**"SHE WILL
TAKE YOUR
BREATH AWAY"**

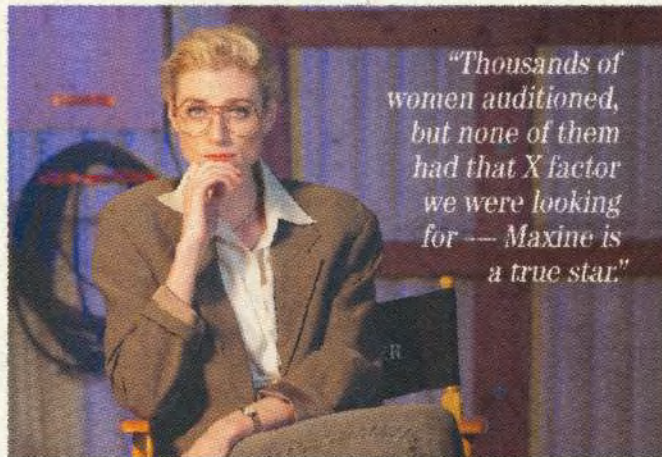
- FANGORIA

**"MAXINE MINX IS A
F*CKIN'
MOVIE STAR"**

- SPY

**"★★★★★
SINFULLY GOOD"**

- THE VILLAGE VOICE



*"Thousands of
women auditioned,
but none of them
had that X factor
we were looking
for — Maxine is
a true star."*

JOINING DIRECTOR
ELIZABETH BENDER



AND STAR
MOLLY BENNETT

The Puritan II

Something bad has happened to Veronica Rutland. An ancient evil has awakened.
Forcing this "perfect" housewife to do terrible, awful, murderous things. The devil
has come back. To make her pay for her greatest sin. The sin of living.

**HOW FAR ARE YOU WILLING TO GO
FOR MAXINE? TEXT (213) 788-1211
TO JOIN HER FAN CLUB
AND PROVE YOUR UNDYING LOVE.**



NEW HORIZON STUDIOS PRESENTS "THE PURITAN II" STARRING MAXINE MINX, LOLA LARUE, SODIE SIMMONS, MOLLY BENNETT, AND ETHAN BLACK.
WRITTEN BY ELIZABETH BENDER. MUSIC COMPOSED AND CONDUCTED BY MAX RIVERA. EXECUTIVE PRODUCER CALEB FAIRCHILD. PRODUCED BY STERLING BELL. DIRECTED BY ELIZABETH BENDER.
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A24

R RESTRICTED Under 17 requires
accompanying Parent or Adult Guardian

'SWANS,' FROM 37

a voyeuristic experience. Much better to just watch these characters on [TV] ... than having to actually deal with them in real life.

MOORE It would've been interesting and intriguing to know all of them. ... These were really powerful women of their time, even though there were cultural limitations on their full expression. They really ruled New York.

RINGWALD As a writer myself and some-

body who has always been a bookish person and a fan of [Capote], I would've just loved to have sat with him and talked about writing and process and his books and the characters.

SEVIGNY I mean, of course, James Baldwin, in a second. ... He's always been a hero of mine. He had such an amazing voice as a writer and as a person. He had so much to say and so much we can still learn from him. He also just seemed like f— fun.

Thoughts on the late Treat Williams not being able to witness the series' impact?

WATTS He was just so grateful about getting a role like this at this point in his life — as we all were — and so he really threw himself into it. It's heartbreaking that he's not getting to witness all the wonderful accolades, because he worked so hard, and it shows in his stellar performance. ✉



1
Chloë
Sevigny as
C.Z. Guest

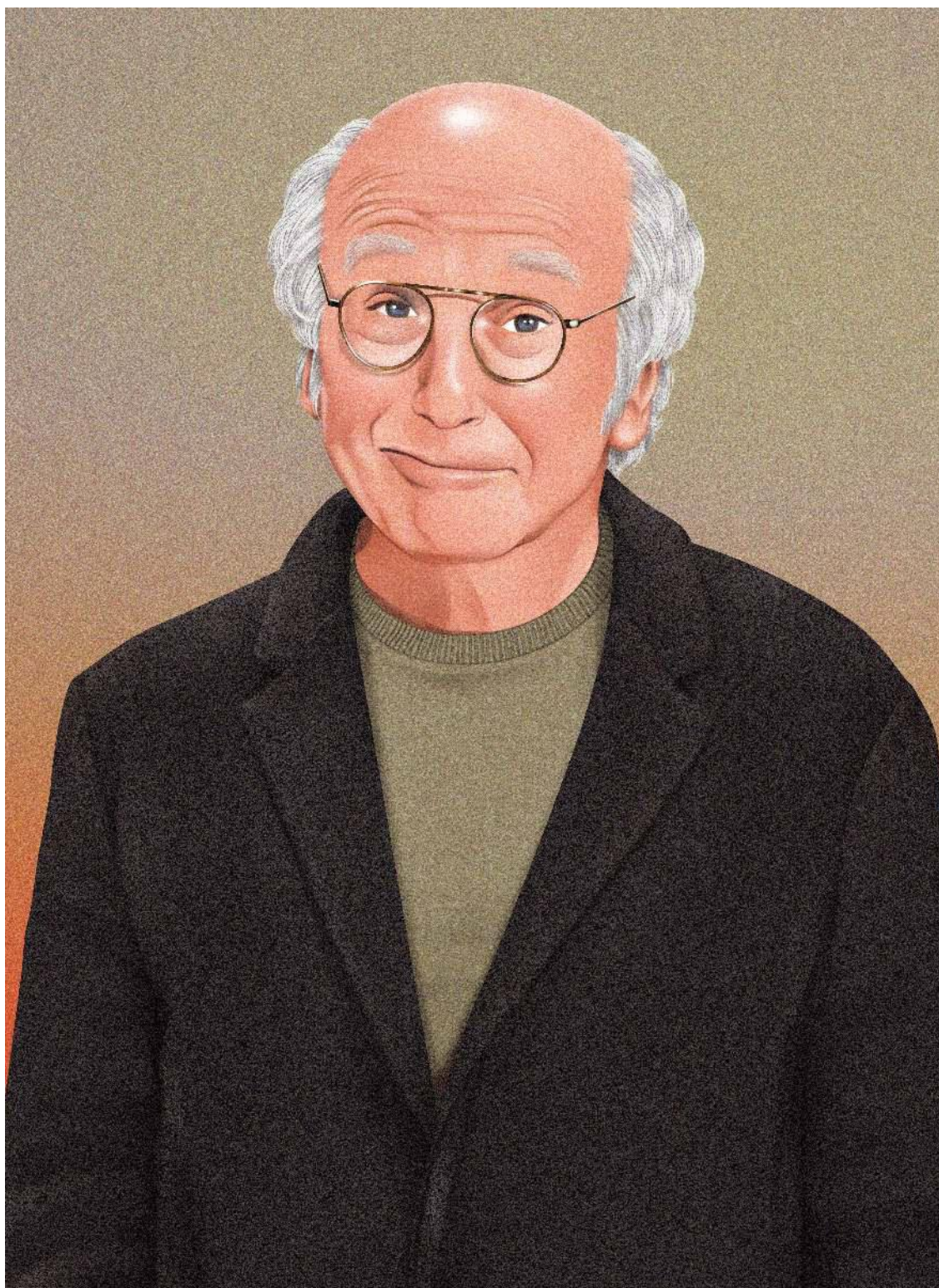
2
Naomi Watts
as Babe
Paley

3
Diane Lane
as Slim
Keith

4
Demi Moore
as Ann
Woodward

5
Molly Ringwald
as Joanne
Carson

6
Calista
Flockhart as
Lee Radziwill



The Spotlight
Who's Counting

Story by
Carla Meyer

Illustration by
Natalia Agatte
For The Times

Reasons to complain

Larry David had extraordinary runs with his comedy series 'Seinfeld' and 'Curb Your Enthusiasm,' but you'd never know it from his measly Emmy count. "Curb" concluded its run this year — will the Television Academy finally make it up to him with some awards?

29

David's nomination total, for writing and producing "Seinfeld," producing and starring in "Curb" and hosting "Saturday Night Live."

2

He has won twice, for producing and writing for "Seinfeld." Both wins came ...

31

... years ago.

16

Nominations David has received for "Curb Your Enthusiasm" without winning, including ...

6

... for comedy lead. This total could be viewed as a feat on its own considering David plays a version of himself and often seems on the edge of breaking character.

51

The "nomination is the award" trend unfortunately extends to the whole show, which has been nominated 51 times but won just ...

2

... Emmys, for directing (Robert B. Weide, 2003) and single-camera picture editing (Steven Rasch, 2012).

4%

The show's win rate, which is ...

3

... Pretty (1), pretty (2), pretty (3) sad, especially when considering ...

10

... FX's "The Bear" collected 10 comedy Emmys for just its first season. But *is* the "Bear" even a comedy? Eh.

2024

If the "Bear's" Jeremy Allen White beats David in the comedy lead race, David could file a grievance.

How this team got those ‘Masters of the Air’ flyboys soaring into battle

The crew on the WWII-set series was able to realistically depict high-altitude combat — all without ever leaving the ground.

Story by
Hugh Hart

LEE MORRISON WAS IN Greece staging car chases for the James Bond movie “No Time to Die” when director Cary Fukunaga asked him to handle stunts for the limited series “Masters of the Air.” “My initial reaction was, ‘Oh, s—, I don’t know if I want to do that,’” says the British stunt coordinator. “I knew the ‘Masters of the Air’ book [by Donald L. Miller] and wondered, ‘How are we going to shoot this? Are there any B-17s still flying? Are we going to jump out of them?’” ¶ Morrison helped figure out the answers when he signed on to oversee the action for Apple TV+’s fact-based series about “The Bloody 100th” Bomb Group’s raids over Nazi Germany during World War II led by Maj. John “Bucky” Egan (Callum Turner) and Maj. Gale “Buck” Cleven (Austin Butler). ¶ Cinematographer Jac Fitzgerald, who’d earlier worked on “The King” with “Masters” primary director of photography, Adam Arkapaw, came on board for Episodes 5 and 6 alongside directors Anna Boden and Ryan Fleck. It was a humbling experience, Morrison recalls. “Sometimes Jac and I would get to set early to prep, and we’d just stand there in silence, looking at the aircraft on these gimbals and realizing: ‘We have to do justice to these very brave men.’” ¶ Morrison and Fitzgerald spoke via Zoom about collaborating with visual effects supervisor Stephen Rosenbaum’s team to simulate the airmen’s harrowing missions 25,000 feet over Germany without actually leaving Earth.

B-17 bombers play a starring role in this series. What did you have to work with?

JAC FITZGERALD When I came on, the whole machine was well underway. For the airfield sequences, two tow-built planes had been built one-on-one scale, which could be moved but not at speed and cer-

tainly not in the air. On the volume stage [in Aston Clinton, England], a third B-17 was broken into sections. The nose and the cockpit were placed on top of a gimbal. The fuselage was another space with a long body. And the ball turret was a stand-alone piece so we could get underneath or down into it.

Can you explain how the LED “volume” works? Images are projected onto it?

FITZGERALD The volume screen [surrounding the actors] is meant to be photo-real so the actors in the plane can look outside the window and see other planes, explosions, clouds, bodies flying through the air. However, the VFX team didn’t have time to build all those shots, so we used proxy images. The actors could watch “tracer bullets” whiz past and see explosions in midair and the eyelines would all be correct.

LEE MORRISON The volume stage enabled me to ground the actors, excuse the pun,

in the fuselage with the aircraft and the action happening around them. That’s why it feels so visceral in Episode 5 when the flak is happening. Even though the images weren’t picture-ready, they gave the actors something to react to. When you shake the fuselage [on the tilting gimbal], it almost feels like you’ve got a handheld “Band of Brothers” in there.

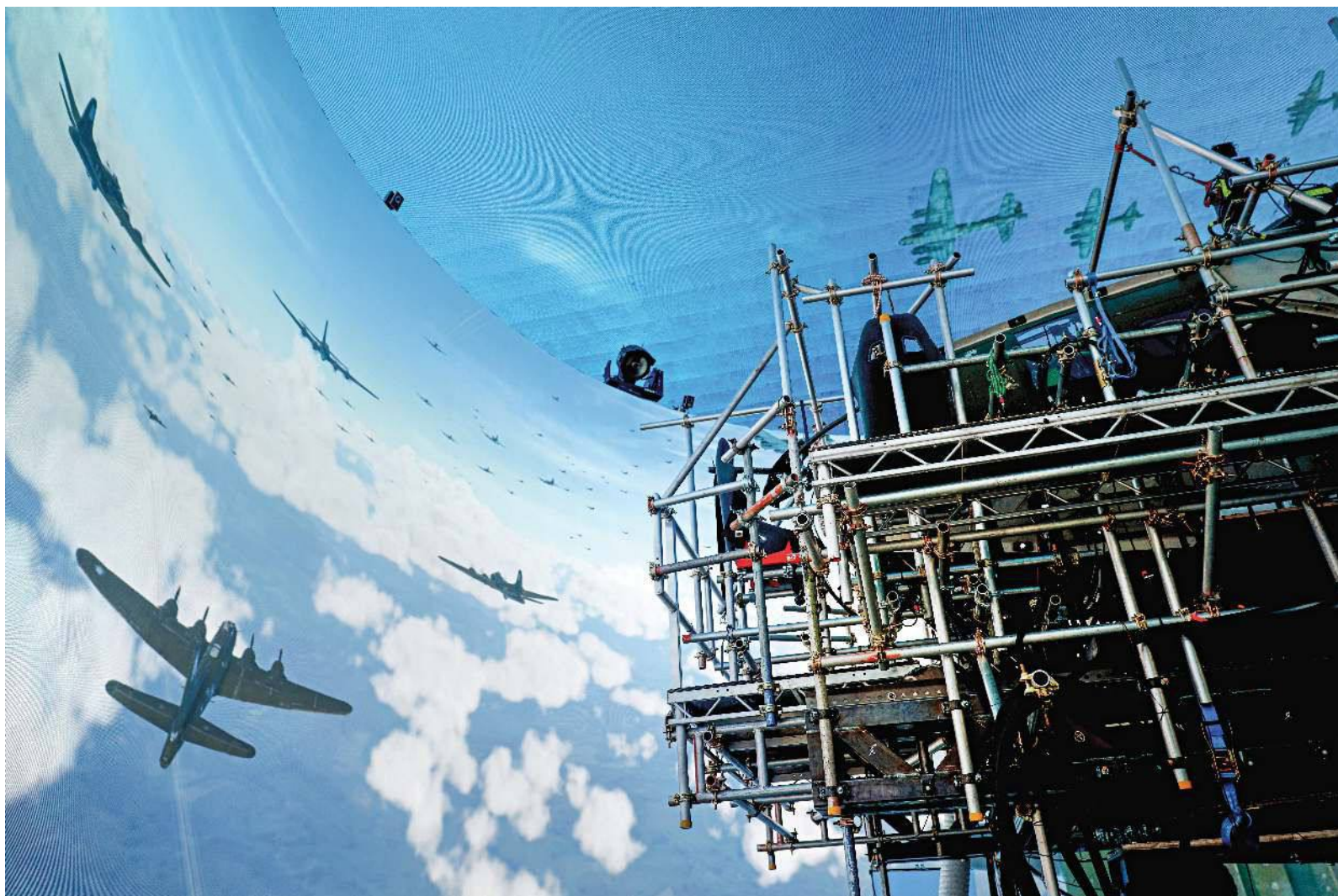
Jac, how did you shoot those chaotic cockpit sequences for Episode 5’s Munster Raid?

FITZGERALD Framing-wise, Cary and Adam had broken things down into a kind of road map: “These are good ways to shoot when they’re in the cockpit.” We tried that for a while but decided to do a lot more handheld so we could get in closer and film the characters’ reactions to each other and to what was going on outside the plane.

There wasn’t any actual aerial photography?



→ Cinematographer Jac Fitzgerald, left, and stunt coordinator Lee Morrison aimed for airborne realism.



MORRISON They did do some aerial shots later on that were used in Episodes 5 and 6. **FITZGERALD** And after principal photography, they shot plates and did various captures of environments.

When the B-17 gets hit by Nazi flak and crew members are forced to bail, it looks terrifying. How did you set up the jump-from-the-plane scenes?

MORRISON We had the actors jump out of the bomb bay on stunt lines, and we hit 'em with a load of wind and basically scared the life out of them. Imagine being hung outside of an aircraft right next to the propeller!

Where does that "load of wind" come from?

MORRISON Our special effects supervisor, Neil Corbould, set up huge V8 engines with big propellers surrounded by a cage and locked down to the ground. We ran the engines just out of frame, pushing air to motivate the [actor's] body like it would be if he were traveling outside a plane go-

ing 200 miles an hour.

FITZGERALD And every time a window got smashed, we'd use those wind machines to blow the actors around inside the plane. To make it feel even more dangerous, we had the gimbal shaking the plane.

One B-17 survives Luftwaffe attacks and crash-lands in Northern Africa. How did that sequence come together?

FITZGERALD One of the planes was taken apart on [the airfield] location, put on a truck, driven to the [Lux Machina] volume stage and reassembled, so we had an entire plane sitting there in front of this big volume wall, which would be Africa. There were two or three super-wide shots filmed on location. Then the ground and everything was built to match that background environment.

"Masters of the Air" has loads of intense action. Lee, what was the most challenging stunt you pulled off for this show?

MORRISON When we shot our stuntmen at

↑ Photo-real images on the volume screen helped actors react realistically as they "flew" a plane on a gimbal.

2,000 feet using round parachutes similar to what the guys in the 100th would have done for real. "Rounds" came before modern canopy parachutes, which give you some control [to steer] left or right, but with rounds, most of the time it's straight down and quite quickly. [During the war], many of the boys, when they hit the ground, would break a leg or injure a knee or suffer back compressions or, in the series, break a neck.

So your stunt guys were jumping for real with the same type of rudimentary parachutes used during World War II?

MORRISON And they were keen to do it. My advisor was Gen. Simon Edwards, who has the most halo jumps in the [Royal Air Force] and tests all the parachutes for Special Forces. On one of the jumps, if you watch closely, you'll see his body fold in half backwards. [Edwards was not injured in the jump.] We were pushing boundaries, but it looked great in the series. For us, it was a huge honor. ✉

→ Théodore Pellerin and Noah Jupe, center, in “Franklin,” set in 18th century France.



Clothes — and designers — make the man this season

Tips and tricks from 4 costume designers who crafted period-perfect looks for TV’s debonair male characters.

Story by
Emma Fraser

APPL TV+ CONTINUES TO build its library of historical dramas, adding the 18th century-set “Franklin” and conspiracy thriller “Manhunt” to its spring offerings. With stories occurring nearly 100 years apart, the two titles share an affinity for power dressing. On Starz, “Mary & George” underscores how alluring clothing can help woo a Jacobean king, and Paramount+ With Showtime keeps up the sartorial flourishes with the 30-plus-year-spanning “A Gentleman in Moscow,” which opens in 1920s Russia.

Corsets and gorgeous gowns have long dominated the period costume design conversation. But in 2024, turning back the clock showcases how menswear is

pulling focus. Here, costume designers Annie Symons (“Mary & George”), Olivier Bériot (“Franklin”), Katie Irish (“Manhunt”) and Sam Perry (“A Gentleman in Moscow”) discuss attention-grabbing masculine attire across four separate centuries.

Rather than pushing her daughter toward a wealthy suitor, Mary Villiers (Julianne Moore) wields her son, George (Nicholas Galitzine), like a dazzling weapon to get close to King James I (Tony Curran). First, Mary sends an unrefined George, wearing drab brown, to France in 1612 to learn how to be a gentleman. “When George comes back, he’s haute fashion, beyond fashion. All the other boys are wearing a mishmash of Elizabethan or early Jacobean,” says Symons.

A seductive dance in a see-through embroidered shirt, crimson ruff and gold leather belt allows George to beguile the king. Director Oliver Hermanus “was very keen that we see the masculine form, particularly through these fine fabrics, and there is a great sensuality about that,” adds Symons. “It’s suggestive, not explicit, and I think these fabrics are very beautiful and move well.” King James’ penchant for attractive men and jewels was not a secret, with George welcoming such symbols of “power, money, swag” as lace and pearls. “A single pearl [earring] is synonymous with the age. I think it was a good look. I know Nick rather likes it, and Tony rather likes it, and according to TikTok, they’ve all gone bonkers for it.”

George Villiers is far from alone in getting a wardrobe upgrade in France. Skip to 1776, when 17-year-old Temple Franklin (Noah Jupe) travels with his grandfather, Benjamin Franklin (Michael Douglas), to Paris to secure support against the British. In an act of adolescent rebellion, Temple follows the French aristocratic trends favored by his new friends, like soon-to-be war hero Lafayette (Théodore Pellerin). “Temple embraced the chic of these guys. We buy this fabric, which is a silk with the

RÉMY GRANDROQUES APPLE

design in it — very rich type of silk from Lyon — to show how he tried to look different from his grandfather,” Bériot says.

Bériot presented veteran TV director Tim Van Patten with mood boards featuring paintings from the eight years the Franklins spent in France, alongside an image from a contemporary collection. “For the grandson, I looked at a big fashion brand like Balmain for H&M, and I do a parallel between a painting of that period and this look to give a feeling of today,” Bériot says. Although Temple’s closet gets an overhaul, green is an anchoring shade as it matches the only color painting of the young man.

In what’s referred to as the “Pretty Woman” scene, Temple undergoes a classic teen makeover in the first episode. “I push each character a little bit to be more fun because I think it’s a fun moment in the story, and it was fun to do,” Bériot notes. Think gender fluidity is a modern phenomenon? Not so, Symons says. “Jacobean style as menswear was becoming feminized in many ways,” but French fashion in the 1770s turned the gender fluidity dial further.

Unlike George and Temple, actor and assassin John Wilkes Booth (Anthony Boyle) eschews color in “Manhunt.” Set in the lead-up to and aftermath of President Lincoln’s assassination, Booth favors statement pieces such as a black felt slouch hat. “I think it shows Booth’s flair because it’s so different from the everyday kind of hats that we see that he stands out in a crowd,” Irish says. Other affectations such as Booth’s cravat pin, pinkie ring and monogrammed leather boots add to his carefully curated image.

As with “Manhunt,” Count Alexander Ilyich Rostov (Ewan McGregor) in “A Gentleman in Moscow” wears a monogrammed signet ring as part of his style identity. “I’ve had people look at me like I’m crazy when I say that I love menswear because it seems like such a staid and rigid set of rules,” Irish says. “But there are so many little choices within them that you can personalize it that way.”

The 2024 award season showed an uptick in brooches and lapel pins worn by men, harking to the 19th century. “One of the things about this specific period of Victorian menswear is it is a ‘more is more’ period when men had tons of jewelry available to them *if you could afford it*,” Irish adds.

Look closely at “Manhunt”: Wolf imagery appears in Secretary of War Edwin Stanton’s (Tobias Menzies) accessories. Lincoln nicknamed Stanton “Mars,” and the animal associated with the Roman god of war was the wolf. “We made some custom buttons that had wolves on them based on some we had found in research,” Irish says. “My props master came through

➤ **Brandon Flynn, left, and Tobias Menzies in Apple TV’s “Manhunt.”**

➤ **George Villiers (Nicholas Galitzine) gets glammed up in Starz’s “Mary & George.”**



and had the most beautiful watch fob with the head of a wolf on it.” Intricately embroidered custom waistcoats signify wealth, highlighting Stanton’s mood and allegiance through shades of blue: “There is a bit of a peacock aspect just in being very proud of what he and Lincoln have accomplished.”

Leadership values change, but being placed under permanent house arrest by the Bolsheviks at the luxury Hotel Metropol in “A Gentleman in Moscow” doesn’t stop Alexander from dressing the aristocratic part. “We started with him being more peacocky, so full of himself and a big contrast to what was going on in the rest of Russia,” Perry says. “We had the most matching socks and handkerchiefs — *all* the details.”

Given that Alexander no longer has the option (or finances) to venture to London or Paris, it helps that the count’s footwear is of excellent quality. “Dressing up with

your shoes became redundant after he’d been there for a while, but they were well-made, good things, and he wouldn’t throw them away,” Perry notes.

Alexander’s romance with movie star Anna Urbanova (Mary Elizabeth Winstead) gives the former count a run for his sartorial money. “They’re both at their most peacocky and glamorous when they fall in love, and they grow together as a couple,” the costume designer adds. “I thought that was lovely to do with knitwear and a softening of fabrics — using different flannels toward the 1940s and ’50s.” Priorities evolve, jacket lengths rise and fall and formalwear is seen less frequently, but attention to detail remains.

Undoubtedly, playful menswear that doesn’t recede into the background is in vogue on TV and the red carpet. “It goes in and out of fashion throughout the decades or centuries,” says Symons. “I think it’s having another renaissance.” ✉

Haven't caught up with this season's top series? There's still time left

As the ballot deadline approaches, here's a look at how 15 of the Emmys' main categories will shake out and the shows that shouldn't be overlooked by voters or viewers.



By Glenn Whipp
Columnist

EMMY VOTING IS UNDERWAY, AND IF YOU'RE one of the 24,000 Television Academy members wondering if there's still time to binge-watch all three seasons of "Reservation Dogs" to finally get up to speed, the answer is: Yes. But get busy. Ballots are due June 24. ¶ Is there ever enough time to watch everything and be a fully informed Emmy voter? Probably not. There are a handful of shows I never got around to viewing, despite my best intentions. And no, I'm not revealing them because I don't need your judgment. I didn't chastise (beyond a little silent rebuke to myself) latecomers to "Reservation Dogs," as I don't think you can blame anyone for not sampling each and every one of the more than 300 series submitted. Unless you didn't watch "Shōgun." Then we need to talk. ¶ Another problem vexing voters this year is that there are too many worthy contenders in the limited series categories and not enough decent dramas to reward, making balloting equally challenging but for different reasons. Comedies? Just right. As long as "Reservation Dogs" is finally rewarded. But again, no judgment. (Yet.) ¶ Here's a quick rundown of the series and actors that seem to be registering with voters, with viewing suggestions for anyone still doing their homework. I'll revisit these in The Times before Emmy nominations are announced July 17.

Illustration by
Susana Sanchez

LIMITED SERIES

"BABY REINDEER"
"FARGO"
"LESSONS IN CHEMISTRY"
"RIPLEY"
"TRUE DETECTIVE: NIGHT COUNTRY"
COULD SURPRISE "Masters of the Air"
DON'T FORGET "Expats"

LIMITED SERIES LEAD ACTRESS

JODIE FOSTER, "TRUE DETECTIVE: NIGHT COUNTRY"
NICOLE KIDMAN, "EXPATS"
BRIE LARSON, "LESSONS IN CHEMISTRY"
JUNO TEMPLE, "FARGO"
SOFIA VERGARA, "GRISELDA"
NAOMI WATTS, "FEUD: CAPOTE VS. THE SWANS"
COULD SURPRISE Kate Winslet, "The Regime"
DON'T FORGET Julianne Moore, "Mary & George"

LIMITED SERIES LEAD ACTOR

MATT BOMER, "FELLOW TRAVELERS"
RICHARD GADD, "BABY REINDEER"
JON HAMM, "FARGO"
TOM HOLLANDER, "FEUD: CAPOTE VS. THE SWANS"
ANDREW SCOTT, "RIPLEY"
TONY SHALHOUB, "MR. MONK'S LAST CASE"
COULD SURPRISE Hoa Xuande, "The Sympathizer"
DON'T FORGET Ewan McGregor, "A Gentleman in Moscow"

LIMITED SERIES SUPPORTING ACTRESS

LILY GLADSTONE, "UNDER THE BRIDGE"
JESSICA GUNNING, "BABY REINDEER"
AJA NAOMI KING, "LESSONS IN CHEMISTRY"
DIANE LANE, "FEUD: CAPOTE VS.

"THE SWANS"
JENNIFER JASON LEIGH, "FARGO"
NAVA MAU, "BABY REINDEER"
KALI REIS, "TRUE DETECTIVE: NIGHT COUNTRY"
COULD SURPRISE Kathy Bates, "The Great Lillian Hall"
DON'T FORGET Sarayu Blue, "Expats"

LIMITED SERIES SUPPORTING ACTOR

JONATHAN BAILEY, "FELLOW TRAVELERS"
FINN BENNETT, "TRUE DETECTIVE: NIGHT COUNTRY"
ROBERT DOWNEY JR., "THE SYMPATHIZER"
JOHN HAWKES, "TRUE DETECTIVE: NORTH COUNTRY"
JOE KEERY, "FARGO"
LEWIS PULLMAN, "LESSONS IN CHEMISTRY"
SAM SPRUELL, "FARGO"
COULD SURPRISE Treat Williams, "Feud: Capote vs. the Swans"
DON'T FORGET Hugh Grant, "The Regime"

COMEDY SERIES

"ABBOTT ELEMENTARY"
"THE BEAR"
"CURB YOUR ENTHUSIASM"
"THE GENTLEMEN"
"HACKS"
"ONLY MURDERS IN THE BUILDING"
"RESERVATION DOGS"
"WHAT WE DO IN THE SHADOWS"
COULD SURPRISE "Palm Royale"
DON'T FORGET "I'm a Virgin"

COMEDY ACTRESS

QUINTA BRUNSON, "ABBOTT ELEMENTARY"
AYO EDEBIRI, "THE BEAR"
SELENA GOMEZ, "ONLY MURDERS IN THE BUILDING"
JEAN SMART, "HACKS"
KRISTEN WIIG, "PALM ROYALE"
COULD SURPRISE Maya Rudolph, "Loot"
DON'T FORGET Devery Jacobs, "Reservation Dogs"

COMEDY LEAD ACTOR

LARRY DAVID, "CURB YOUR ENTHUSIASM"
THEO JAMES, "THE GENTLEMEN"
STEVE MARTIN, "ONLY MURDERS IN THE BUILDING"
MARTIN SHORT, "ONLY MURDERS IN THE BUILDING"
JEREMY ALLEN WHITE, "THE BEAR"
COULD SURPRISE Kelsey Grammer, "Frasier"
DON'T FORGET Jharrel Jerome, "I'm a Virgin"



DON'T FORGET "Sugar"

DRAMA LEAD ACTRESS

JENNIFER ANISTON, "THE MORNING SHOW"

MAYA ERSKINE, "MR. & MRS. SMITH"

ANNA SAWAI, "SHÖGUN"
IMELDA STAUNTON, "THE CROWN"

EMMA STONE, "THE CURSE"
REESE WITHERSPOON, "THE MORNING SHOW"

COULD SURPRISE Carrie Coon, "The Gilded Age"

DON'T FORGET Ella Purnell, "Fallout"

DRAMA LEAD ACTOR

DONALD GLOVER, "MR. & MRS. SMITH"

WALTON GOGGINS, "FALLOUT"
COSMO JARVIS, "SHÖGUN"

GARY OLDMAN, "SLOW HORSES"

HIROYUKI SANADA, "SHÖGUN"
DOMINIC WEST, "THE CROWN"

COULD SURPRISE Tom Hiddleston, "Loki"

DON'T FORGET Colin Farrell, "Sugar"

DRAMA SUPPORTING ACTRESS

CHRISTINE BARANSKI, "THE GILDED AGE"

ELIZABETH DEBICKI, "THE CROWN"

MOEKA HOSHI, "SHÖGUN"
LESLEY MANVILLE, "THE CROWN"

FUMI NIKAI, "SHÖGUN"
CYNTHIA NIXON, "THE GILDED AGE"

KAREN PITTMAN, "THE MORNING SHOW"

HOLLAND TAYLOR, "THE MORNING SHOW"

COULD SURPRISE Greta Lee, "The Morning Show"

DON'T FORGET Kristin Scott Thomas, "Slow Horses"

DRAMA SUPPORTING ACTOR

KHALID ABDALLA, "THE CROWN"
TADANOBU ASANO, "SHÖGUN"

BILLY CRUDUP, "THE MORNING SHOW"

MARK DUPLASS, "THE MORNING SHOW"

JON HAMM, "THE MORNING SHOW"

TAKEHIRO HIRA, "SHÖGUN"
NATHAN LANE, "THE GILDED AGE"

JONATHAN PRYCE, "THE CROWN"
COULD SURPRISE Ke Huy Quan, "Loki"

DON'T FORGET Tokuma Nishio, "Shōgun"

COMEDY SUPPORTING ACTRESS

LIZA COLÓN-ZAYAS, "THE BEAR"
HANNAH EINBINDER, "HACKS"

ABBY ELLIOTT, "THE BEAR"
JANELLE JAMES, "ABBOTT ELEMENTARY"

SHERYL LEE RALPH, "ABBOTT ELEMENTARY"

MERYL STREEP, "ONLY MURDERS IN THE BUILDING"

LISA ANN WALTER, "ABBOTT ELEMENTARY"

COULD SURPRISE Carol Burnett, "Palm Royale"

DON'T FORGET Molly Gordon, "The Bear"

COMEDY SUPPORTING ACTOR

LIONEL BOYCE, "THE BEAR"

PAUL W. DOWNS, "HACKS"
MATTY MATHESON, "THE BEAR"

EBON MOSS-BACHRACH, "THE BEAR"

OLIVER PLATT, "THE BEAR"
TYLER JAMES WILLIAMS, "ABBOTT ELEMENTARY"

BOWEN YANG, "SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE"

← Brie Larson in "Lessons in Chemistry," clockwise from top left, Walton Goggins in "Fallout," Anna Sawai in "Shōgun," Matt Bomer in "Fellow Travelers," Kristen Wiig in "Palm Royale" and Steve Martin in "Only Murders in the Street"

COULD SURPRISE Carl Clemons-Hopkins, "Hacks"

DON'T FORGET Chris Perfetti, "Abbott Elementary"

DRAMA SERIES

"THE CROWN"

"THE CURSE"

"FALLOUT"

"THE GILDED AGE"

"MR. & MRS. SMITH"

"THE MORNING SHOW"

"SHÖGUN"

"SLOW HORSES"

COULD SURPRISE "Loki"

How Barbra Streisand came to do a song for a TV series for the first time

The iconic singer says it's all in the timing, and 'the subject matter was of great personal interest' as well. Will she direct again? 'I never say never!'

Story by
Daniel
Vaillancourt



N APRIL 25 — THE DAY after her 82nd birthday — Barbra Streisand released “Love Will Survive,” the 10-time Grammy winner’s

first new single in six years, as well as another first: Never before has she recorded an end-title theme song for a television series. The poignant ballad, which showcases Streisand’s still-commanding vocal prowess, is on the soundtrack of Peacock’s six-part Holocaust drama “The Tattooist of Auschwitz,” based on Heather Morris’ bestselling book. Starring Harvey Keitel and Melanie Lynskey, the limited series tells the story of a concentration camp prisoner made to tattoo the ID numbers on his fellow prisoners, even as he falls in love. ¶ The Envelope was curious as to how Streisand’s involvement came about. The star answered our questions via email.

↓ Anna Próchniak as a concentration camp prisoner in “The Tattooist of Auschwitz.”

How did this project and song find you — and how did it all come together?

Timing is everything. I happened to be working on a special new album when the gifted composer (and my onetime neighbor) Hans Zimmer reached out to one of my producers, Peter Asher, to ask if I’d be open to hearing a theme he and co-composer Kara Talve wrote for a TV series based on the book “The Tattooist of Auschwitz.” Obviously, with all that’s going on in the world today, the subject matter was of great personal interest to me, but the music cue was just that — a lovely piece of writing but not a full song. I asked my other producer, Walter Afanasieff, if he could transform Hans and Kara’s theme into an actual song. And then we asked Charlie Midnight to write the lyrics. We’re a good team, zero egos, and it was a very

easy process. Then we asked my dear friend Bill Ross to work on the arrangement with Walter. As it happened, Bill was in London conducting the score for a movie with the London Symphony Orchestra, so it all fell into place rather quickly. They recorded the track in England, and I recorded my vocal at my engineer’s home studio in Malibu.

Were you at all apprehensive about returning to the recording studio?

Yes, I was quite nervous! I hadn’t made a new record in about five or six years, and I honestly didn’t know what my voice would sound like after doing my audiobook for six weeks straight — six days a week, for five hours a day. I never do any of the things I hear most singers do, like warm-up exercises ... too boring! So, the first time I had to sing a song for this new album, I literally stood in front of the microphone, in a small vocal booth, and prayed to God my voice would be there. And lo and behold, my prayers were answered. I have a wonderful engineer named Jochem [van der Saag] who somehow feeds a great sound into my headphones, with all the instruments playing with a perfect mix of my voice and the orchestra, so it makes singing a pleasure. Very different than singing live in concert, where I can never really hear myself because I can’t wear those earwigs [“in-ear” devices].

Why do you think it’s important that audiences watch “The Tattooist of Auschwitz”?

During the Holocaust, 6 million Jews were murdered. Historically speaking, it wasn’t that long ago. And today, antisemitism has reared its ugly head again. So a TV series like “The Tattooist of Auschwitz” (based on true events) is a way of reminding people that we must be vigilant or else we’ll repeat the tragedies of the past.

You write in your autobiography that theatrical movies are increasingly hard to get made. I’m sure you know your fans would love you to act and/or



MARTIN MLAKA SKY U.K.



“WITH ALL THAT’S GOING ON IN THE WORLD TODAY, THE SUBJECT MATTER WAS OF GREAT PERSONAL INTEREST TO ME.”

RUSSELL JAMES

Barbra Streisand

direct again. Would you ever consider a streaming series or film — acting or directing it — if the project spoke deeply to you?

I do love movies. I just don’t see myself spending years trying to raise the financing for a new project, which requires a commitment of energy I’d rather spend elsewhere — but I never say never! I do love directing movies, and I’d pursue it if

someone else did all the heavy lifting. I have a great producer friend who wants to do this with me, so we’ll see. I also enjoy spending time with my family, my good friends and especially my delicious grandchildren! (Not to mention my dogs!)

Would you ever consider adapting your autobiography as a streaming limited series?

Absolutely not! But now that I’m finished with the book, I’m involved in making a documentary that will collect lots of unseen footage from my career, so some subjects I wrote about will have a visual reference.

After all you’ve done and been rewarded for, is there anything left to cross off your list?

I’ve been incredibly fortunate that so many of my professional aspirations came true. I’ve also tried using my public platform to shine a spotlight on issues that personally mean a lot to me — climate change, women’s equality, including a woman’s right to choose and medical research on women’s hearts via my Streisand’s Women’s Heart Center at Cedars-Sinai, and my center at UCLA, which is

focusing for now on “Truth in the Public Sphere.” Let me end here with a song called “Here’s to Life” that sort of sums it all up in a lovely way.

“I had my share, I drank my fill / and even though I’m satisfied, I’m hungry still / to see what’s down another road beyond the hill / and do it all again.”

I’m still curious to see what surprises life has in store for me! ✉

An essay by Ron Nyswaner on making 'Fellow Travelers' and drawing from history, both personal and political



I BEGAN THE PITCH FOR "FELLOW

Travelers," my adaptation of Thomas Mallon's beautiful novel, with a piece of personal history. Growing up in a small Pennsylvania town in the 1960s, I never heard the word "homosexual" spoken aloud. There were no gay characters in movies or books, or on television. I grew up believing that my hidden self was evil. Unspeakable.

I was captivated by Mallon's story of Hawkins (Hawk) Fuller and Timothy Laughlin, two vastly different men conducting a passionate affair in 1950s Washington, D.C., during the government's crusade against homosexuals. Hawk is selfish and confident. Tim is religious and sensitive. They struggle to love while hiding the part of themselves that allows them to love.

I was advised this story would be impossible to sell for three reasons: It was period, political and gay.

Being rebellious by nature, I decided to lean into the elements of the story that were deemed challenging. A period piece is problematic? In our scripts, every detail will be meticulously researched and much of the dialogue will come from historical records.

Rather than avoid politics, we'll turn our political characters into flesh-and-blood antagonists, illuminating the dark secrets behind their destructive deeds.

The whole thing is just too gay? We'll create a gay love story with sex scenes that are passionate, tense and rough. We'll take you on a gay sex tour through the decades, from park restrooms to back-room bars. In the end, we'll break your heart.

We sold the show and made it. I have to acknowledge the executives at Fremantle and Showtime who embraced our "balls-out" approach (the expression seems apt) and intrepid executive producers Robbie Rogers, Dan Minahan and Matt Bomer.

We knew we needed to wrap our challenging elements inside a story that is universal and modern. The paranoia of the McCarthy era felt remote, and Mal-

lon's book ends in 1957. But I'd lived through the early days of AIDS, known the terror as those around me fell ill and died, and witnessed the hatred directed at my community.

I realized the AIDS crisis could serve as a bookend to the Lavender Scare. Tim would live in San Francisco, an activist, in the early days of the epidemic. Hawk will travel to Tim, seeking forgiveness, giving Tim power over Hawk in a reversal of their former roles. And these timelines will alternate throughout the show.

But the wheels of my mind kept turning. How might I bring Hawk and Tim together one or two more times? Again, I turned to personal history.

In high school, I was known as the sissy kid with liberal politics who loved Jesus. I protested the Vietnam War and refused to say the Pledge of Allegiance because the United States hadn't yet achieved "liberty and justice for all." When I was banished to the last row of desks in my homeroom, I considered it a badge of honor.

The sixth episode of the series, "Beyond Measure," is set in 1968. Tim's passionate anti-communist politics have morphed into antiwar politics. His Christianity, like mine in my youth, addresses his need to be exalted, to live and love "beyond measure." In my teen years, my religious fervor offered what my peers found in sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll.

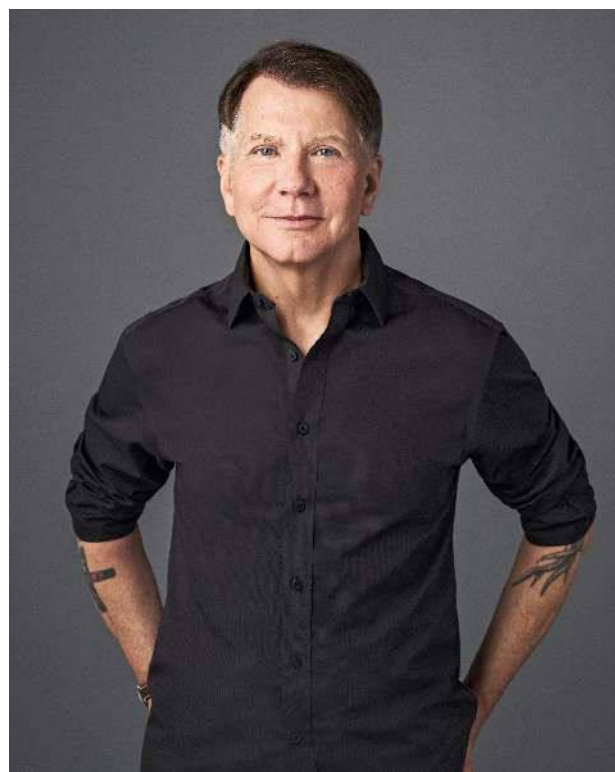
I came out in the late 1970s, drinking, snorting and tumbling into bed with sweaty strangers after nights of dancing to Donna, Thelma and Grace. It was glorious. We had a few gay heroes but none more inspiring than Harvey Milk, the first nationally prominent gay politician. His murder was a shock and a wake-up call, reminding us that we'd only begun to win our freedom.

Episode 7 of "Fellow Travelers," "White Nights," is set in 1979. Hawk and Tim reunite on Fire Island. They splash in the ocean, visit the "meat rack" and sweat on the dance floor. They seem free, until Hawk is forced to face excruciating grief. We placed our second set of lovers, Marcus and Frankie, in San Francisco, for the "explosion of gay rage" that followed the trial of Harvey Milk's murderer, Dan White, and its obscene, lenient sentence.

Hawk's grief, and his yearning to lose himself in drugs and sex, was informed by my own descent into alcoholism and addiction. The candlelight march honoring Milk that ends the episode is coupled with Hawk's decision to return home. Twenty-five years ago, I began my own way home, finding a sober way to live.

The series ends at the National Mall in 1987 with the first display of the AIDS Quilt. Hawk kneels at Tim's quilt square and gives words to the truth he's carried in his heart for 3 ½ decades: "He was the man I loved." Hawk finds redemption in speaking the unspeakable.

I know how he feels. ☒




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ENTERTAINMENT BUSINESS VISIONARIES

Who Keeps the Lights On and the Cameras Rolling?

As stars rise and fall in the world of entertainment, there exists a constellation of frequently unsung heroes who serve neither in front nor behind the camera. Behind the glitz and glamour, there stands a squadron of professionals whose expertise fuels the engines that drive the industry forward.

Lawyers, accountants, lenders, business managers, wealth managers and an array of service providers form the bedrock upon which the edifice of entertainment rests. Their roles are not merely supportive; they are integral and indispensable. Their expertise can get a film or show greenlit ... and can help elevate a project to the next level of excellence.

Los Angeles Times B2B Publishing is excited to present this new business section designed to shine the spotlight on these uniquely talented visionaries in the entertainment industry who provide financing for projects and transactions as well as those who offer advisory services to entertainment industry firms and executives.

Across the following pages you'll read about those who provide essential contributions to the complex ecosystem of contracts, negotiations, finances and logistics – lawyers who wield the skills to navigate the labyrinth of Hollywood contracts, rights and intellectual property laws; accountants who serve as silent architects of financial stability in the entertainment world; and other key players. The trusted advisors alphabetically listed in this section have demonstrated exceptional skills and achievements across the full spectrum of responsibility, exemplary guidance and contributions to the Southern California entertainment business community at large.



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David Acosta

Managing Director, Head of Entertainment Banking
East West Bank

David Acosta serves as managing director and head of entertainment banking at East West Bank, which focuses on clients in the film, television, music and sports industries. With nearly two decades of experience in the entertainment and media financing business, he leads a team responsible for sourcing and structuring financings for various entertainment sectors, including single- and multiple-picture film financing, television productions, sports teams, music companies and other media businesses. Previously, Acosta held a 13-year tenure as team leader in the entertainment division at City National Bank and served as senior vice president and head of entertainment, sports and syndicated finance group at Israel Discount Bank of New York. He holds a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Columbia University.

Belva Anakwenze, principal of Abacus Financial Management Group, is an entertainment business manager in Los Angeles, representing a diverse clientele including entertainers, tech companies and musicians. With over 15 years in the industry, she's a trusted advisor. Anakwenze recently launched "The Earn Up," a financial show on Patreon's Creator Hub YouTube channel, aiming to empower creators in managing their businesses. Her commitment to financial literacy extends to her work with Junior Achievement Southern California and UCLA's Black Business Student Association. In 2021, she was the featured speaker for a very successful webinar for the UC Alumni community on personal financial management. Anakwenze continues to share her expertise through speaking engagements and educational initiatives, including webinars and mentoring programs.



Belva Anakwenze

Entertainment Business Manager
Abacus Financial Business Management

Tom Ara

Partner, Global Co-Chair, Media, Sport and Entertainment
DLA Piper



Tom Ara, a global co-chair at DLA Piper's media, sport and entertainment sector, specializes in domestic and international entertainment transactions. His clientele includes banks, private equity groups and major entertainment companies. Ara advises on corporate transactions, film production, digital content and emerging technologies such as augmented reality. Notable deals include representing TikTok in its groundbreaking "TikTok in the Mix" event and Annapurna Games in acquiring 24 Bit. He is also involved in key distribution agreements for LEGO Group and Coupang Play's partnership with Major League Baseball. Ara's expertise extends to VR content production, as seen in deals with ByteDance and NTHIBAH Pictures. His accolades include features in Variety's Dealmakers Impact Report and Forbes America's Top 200 Lawyers.



Michael Karlin
Founding Partner
NKSFB, LLC



David Weise
Founding Partner
David Weise & Associates



Harley Neuman
Founding Partner
Neuman + Associates



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**Michael Karlin, David Weise
and Harley Neuman**

for being recognized as

**2024 Business of
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Tiffany Boyle

President of
Packaging &
Sales, Producer
Ramo Law PC

For over a decade, Tiffany Boyle has excelled in sales and packaging, bringing numerous films and documentaries to fruition. Leveraging her business acumen and Ramo Law resources, she adeptly connects filmmakers with industry stakeholders. As a partner at Vested Interest, founded with Elsa Ramo, she discovers, develops and produces unique filmmaking voices and stories. Notable projects include financing and sales for "The Card Counter" and "Joyland" and executive producing acclaimed films like "Die in a Gunfight." Boyle actively supports emerging talent through workshops and panels, recently mentoring Marta Reeder and teaching courses for Sundance Collab. She moderated a discussion with a group of female financiers for the 2022 SXSW PanelPicker, "Girls Just Want to Have Funds: Women in Finance."

Jordan Bromley, a leading figure in entertainment law, is known for his extensive contributions to the industry. As the head of Manatt Entertainment, he oversees a practice renowned for facilitating over \$3 billion in major music transactions annually. Notably, he advised Francisco Partners Management on its majority stake investment in Kobalt Music, a pivotal move shaping the future of creator services and digital licensing platforms. Bromley's advocacy extends beyond legal realms; he supports artists' rights through initiatives like the Music Artists Coalition and has played integral roles in legislative actions such as the Music Modernization Act. His recent efforts include securing benefits for entertainment workers under the CARES Act during the pandemic and organizing coalitions for police reform.



Jordan Bromley

Leader of Manatt
Entertainment
*Manatt, Phelps &
Phillips, LLP*

Cheryl A. Calhoun

Managing Director | *CBIZ MHM, LLC*



Cheryl A. Calhoun, managing director of CBIZ MHM, LLC, is a highly experienced public accountant with over 40 years of expertise. After earning her MBA in accounting and information systems from UCLA, she embarked on a career that began in auditing before transitioning to tax services. She specializes in representing high-net-worth individuals, particularly in the film, TV and digital content businesses. Calhoun's former firm, Parks, Palmer, Turner & Yemenidjian was acquired by CBIZ in 1998. Since then, she has since expanded her focus, co-leading the CBIZ Los Angeles family office group and playing a pivotal role in standardizing national best practices for family office services, offering comprehensive assistance in tax structuring, deal management and financial planning.

Mary Craig Calkins

Partner, Insurance Recovery | *Blank Rome LLP*

Mary Craig Calkins has over 35 years of experience in insurance recovery law, recovering hundreds of millions for entertainment clients. She serves as lead coverage counsel for high-profile networks, production companies and other entertainment brands, handling complex disputes involving D&O liability, media, natural disasters, IP, cybersecurity and more. Notably, she advises a major TV network on claims related to election fraud and defamation and an NFL team on insurance issues. Calkins also handles insurance for productions affected by catastrophes and pandemics. She is a past president of the American College of Coverage Counsel and holds leadership roles in the ABA. Recognized by Chambers USA since 2006, Calkins has received numerous awards, including "Top 10 Most Influential Insurance Policyholder Lawyer in California" by Business Today.



Leif Cervantes de Reinstein

Partner | *Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP*



Leif Cervantes de Reinstein, a seasoned entertainment lawyer based in Los Angeles, has a diverse background, having worked as a talent lawyer, M&A attorney and head of legal at Fremantle. At Sheppard Mullin, he specializes in high-stakes negotiations and operational advice, particularly within the entertainment industry. Cervantes de Reinstein's recent achievements include facilitating major deals for renowned clients like 101 Studios and Lionsgate, totaling millions in value. He also supports social causes, offering pro bono services to organizations supporting human rights, equality and animal welfare. He is an active member of Sheppard Mullin's LGBTQ group, promoting diversity and inclusion within the firm. Recognized by Variety, The Legal 500 U.S. and The Hollywood Reporter, Cervantes de Reinstein is esteemed as a top entertainment attorney.

Studios and Lionsgate, totaling millions in value. He also supports social causes, offering pro bono services to organizations supporting human rights, equality and animal welfare. He is an active member of Sheppard Mullin's LGBTQ group, promoting diversity and inclusion within the firm. Recognized by Variety, The Legal 500 U.S. and The Hollywood Reporter, Cervantes de Reinstein is esteemed as a top entertainment attorney.

Chris Chatham

Partner | *Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP*

Chris Chatham is a leading Hollywood dealmaker and lawyer for celebrity-backed consumer brands, representing stars such as Logan Paul, Gabriel Macht, Demi Moore and others in complex corporate deals and litigation. Frequently recognized as one of the entertainment industry's top lawyers, he has facilitated deals worth an estimated \$10 billion, with clients generating over 1,000 hours of TV annually and achieving significant milestones, such as "Suits" breaking streaming records. Recent highlights include launching Dr. Phil's Merit Street Media, Logan Paul's fight deal, securing renewals and major deals for CBS and Roku and partnerships for brands like L'Oréal Paris and Bear Fight Whiskey.



Shaun Clark

Partner
*Sheppard,
Mullin, Richter &
Hampton LLP*



Shaun Clark is a leading lawyer specializing in entertainment, branding and technology. He drafts and negotiates agreements for TV and film, including high-profile co-production deals. He has launched globally recognized celebrity brands. Clark advises top clients in virtual reality, podcasting and AI, and negotiates significant content production, endorsement, sponsorship and licensing deals, including stadium naming rights and jersey sponsorships. His recent noteworthy deals include representing Lionsgate in acquiring eOne, Sony Pictures Television in combining Pure Flix with Great American Media and HCL Technologies in a major sponsorship deal with MetLife Stadium. Clark's achievements include being named a Top Entertainment Attorney by Variety and a Thought Leader by Who's Who Legal.

Kelly Coffey is the CEO of City National Entertainment and a member of its executive leadership and senior management teams. She leverages City National and RBC's expertise to provide strategic advice and premier client experiences across the entertainment sector, including film, TV, music, theater and sports. Previously, she served as CEO of City National Bank and held various leadership roles at J.P. Morgan, including CEO of its U.S. private bank. Coffey has been recognized as one of American Banker's 25 Most Powerful Women in Banking and is on the publication's list of Most Powerful Women in Finance. She joined City National in 2019 after a distinguished career at J.P. Morgan, where she also chaired the reputation risk committee and led the women's network.



Kelly Coffey

CEO, Entertainment
Banking
*City National
Bank Entertainment*



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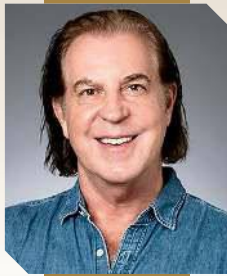
Russ August & Kabat is a preeminent midsize law firm in Los Angeles comprised of lawyers who attended the country's most prestigious schools. The Firm represents local, national and international clients on challenging and cutting-edge legal matters. Led by Stein and Yeargan, the Firm's Entertainment and Media practice focuses on protecting the rights of some of the industry's most successful actors, musicians, producers, and content creators in disputes such as breach of contract, idea theft, defamation, violations of rights of privacy and publicity, copyright infringement, and trademark infringement. Their group has been recognized numerous times for its creative and innovative approach to achieving client goals, often pushing the law forward to address novel problems and the impact of new technologies.

Sandra Crawshaw-Sparks

Partner, Chair,
Entertainment,
Copyright & Media
Practice Group
Proskauer Rose LLP

Sandra Crawshaw-Sparks is a well-known entertainment litigator with over 35 years of experience. As the chair of Proskauer's entertainment, copyright and media practice, she handles high-profile cases involving recording, publishing, licensing and management contracts as well as copyright and trademark infringement claims. Crawshaw-Sparks adeptly manages sensitive pre-litigation and pre-trial resolutions, protecting her clients' reputations and interests. She also serves as national legal counsel for the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences. Her recent cases include defending Live Nation and Madonna in a class action lawsuit and prosecuting copyright infringement claims for Sony Music Entertainment. Crawshaw-Sparks' achievements have earned her accolades from Billboard and Best Lawyers.

Robert Darwell, head of global media and senior partner at Sheppard Mullin's Century City office, has a distinguished career marked by numerous accolades such as The Hollywood Reporter's Power Lawyer and Billboard's Top Music Lawyers. His global practice spans major motion picture studios, television networks and new media companies, offering comprehensive legal counsel on development, production and distribution matters. Notable highlights include representing Amazon Studios in acquiring MGM, Disney in the separation from Miramax and overseeing the development of iconic films like "Traffic" and "Brokeback Mountain." Beyond his legal prowess, Darwell is an award-winning documentary filmmaker, with his debut film "The 90s Club" winning Best Documentary at multiple festivals. A Georgetown law graduate, he blends his passion for entertainment with international trade expertise.



Robert A. Darwell

Partner, Head of
Global Media
*Sheppard,
Mullin, Richter &
Hampton LLP*

Scott Edel

Chair of the Entertainment Group | *Loeb & Loeb LLP*



Scott Edel, chair of Loeb & Loeb's entertainment practice in Los Angeles, is a trusted advisor to leading entertainment and media players. With decades of industry experience, he specializes in guiding startups, facilitating growth for existing businesses and advising market leaders on expansion strategies. Edel's expertise spans complex transactions in film, television, digital platforms and music, earning him a reputation as a top entertainment lawyer. Recent representations include Alcon Entertainment projects, Nexon Studios' \$400-million investment in AGBO and Black Label Media's slate of motion pictures. He also negotiated deals for Nintendo, Games Workshop and Voxovation. Additionally, Edel represents Artists Equity, Morgan Creek Productions and ongoing clients such as Supercell and Studio 8.

David Eisman

Partner | *Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP*

David Eisman, head of Skadden's media and entertainment group and Los Angeles corporate group, is a prominent figure in the industry, known for his role in groundbreaking deals. Representing a diverse clientele including major studios, labels, agencies and celebrities, his innovative solutions and strategic counsel have earned him recognition as a top advisor. Notable recent representations include Drake's OVO Sound, DJ Khaled's We the Best label and various music-focused deals. Eisman also handles significant transactions in film, television and agency sectors, such as AGBO's partnership with Nexon and UTA's acquisition of REP 1 Baseball. Beyond his legal practice, he is committed to pro bono work and mentoring his team. Eisman is recognized by prestigious legal directories including Chambers USA and The Legal 500 U.S.



Guillaume de Chalendar

EVP, Head of Media & Entertainment Banking | *Banc of California*



Guillaume de Chalendar, executive vice president at Banc of California, leads media and entertainment banking from Los Angeles, overseeing strategy and growth for entrepreneurs, businesses and talent in film, television, music and live events. Since joining in January 2022, Banc of California's entertainment business has more than doubled under his leadership. They've evolved from financing indie films to providing comprehensive cash management services and funding solutions, expanding services internationally to Canada, Australia and the U.K. With lines of credit up to U.S. \$200 million and loans in over 30 foreign currencies, Banc of California simplifies lending for clients. De Chalendar's team, with decades of industry experience, offers tailored banking solutions across verticals, recognizing the unique needs of each client.

Olivier de Givenchy

Managing Director, West Region Head | *J.P. Morgan Private Bank*



Olivier de Givenchy, West Region head at J.P. Morgan Private Bank, leads over 630 professionals across 15 offices spanning 10 states. With a career spanning nearly four decades, de Givenchy has held various leadership roles within J.P. Morgan, including CEO of J.P. Morgan Private Bank in the U.K. Based in Los Angeles, he oversees a significant client asset base, particularly in California, where assets under management total nearly \$170 billion. Under his guidance, the California market has seen a 140% increase in headcount over five years, supporting the bank's growth strategy. Beyond banking, de Givenchy serves as vice president for Children in Crisis and ambassador of The Blue Marine Foundation. He also serves on the board of trustees for the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures.

Miles J. Feldman

Founding Partner
*Raines Feldman
Littrell LLP*



Miles Feldman, a founding partner of Raines Feldman Littrell LLP, leads its trials, litigation and dispute resolution department with over 15 litigators. With offices in Los Angeles, New York, Chicago and Costa Mesa, Raines Feldman Littrell LLP is a premier business law firm. Feldman has nearly three decades of experience handling high-profile cases in technology, media and finance. He represents clients such as Belkin International, United Talent Agency and TikTok, achieving results in cutting-edge litigation. Feldman also contributes to charitable causes, mentors through Communities in Schools Los Angeles and participates in the Law Rocks event, raising money for charities such as People Assisting The Homeless (PATH).

Sasha Frid, a founding partner of Miller Barondess, LLP, leads the entertainment practice at the Los Angeles-based litigation firm. Known for his prowess in high-profile trials and arbitrations nationwide, he represents entertainers, artists, labels and music managers. Frid has been consistently recognized on Billboard's Top Music Lawyers list and Variety's Top Entertainment Lawyers. Notable victories include defending Motown legend Smokey Robinson against a \$2+ million claim and securing a swift defense verdict for Virtual Sonics. With over 15 years representing Mötley Crüe and diverse clients like Warner Records and Live Nation, Frid's success extends across the music industry. He is also active in charitable endeavors, supporting cancer research and educational initiatives and contributes to legal and academic fields through his publications and pro bono work.



Alexander (Sasha) Frid

Partner
*Miller
Barondess, LLP*



CONGRATULATIONS, WAYNE!

Citrin Cooperman congratulates Partner and Music Business Management Practice Leader Wayne Kamemoto for being recognized as a "2024 Business of Entertainment Visionary" by *L.A. Times B2B Publishing*.

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Patricia Glaser

Partner & Chair
of the Litigation
Department
Glaser Weil

Patricia Glaser leads Glaser Weil's litigation department, recognized nationally as a top trial attorney sought for high-stakes litigation. With a focus on business trial law, she advises Fortune 500 companies, major studios, real estate investors and high-profile entertainers. Glaser is acclaimed for her role in landmark entertainment cases, earning her consistent top rankings in California for commercial and media litigation. Prominent representations include MGM, Bill Nye "The Science Guy," Miley Cyrus and Jeff Zucker. Recent highlights involve litigation with The Weinstein Company, Lucasfilm and The Walt Disney Company. Her leadership has shaped Glaser Weil's litigation department into a 40-attorney force. Glaser contributes to prominent arts organizations, serves on multiple boards and supports civil rights causes, showcasing her commitment to law and society.

Ilan Haimoff, CPA, CIA, CFE, CFF, is the entertainment practice leader at GHJ, with over 30 years of accounting expertise. He specializes in profit participation and forensic accounting, ensuring fairness and accuracy for stakeholders in major and mini studios. Haimoff's leadership has expanded GHJ's entertainment practice, offering comprehensive solutions including tax planning and compliance. He hosts GHJ's Media Clips Podcast, engaging with industry leaders like Motion Picture and Television Fund (MPTF) president Bob Beitcher and producer Neil Moritz. As a thought leader, he co-chairs conferences and contributes to industry publications. Haimoff mentors team members and advocates for flexible work practices. He actively supports industry initiatives like the MPTF. His contributions have advanced GHJ's success and integrity in the entertainment industry.



Ilan Haimoff

Partner
GHJ

Matt Hallinan

Partner | *Cooley LLP*



Matt Hallinan, a partner at Cooley, is a trusted adviser in venture capital, mergers and strategic legal matters for clients across diverse industries, including entertainment and technology. He guided Justin Bieber in a record-breaking \$200-million deal with Hipgnosis Songs Capital, among other high-profile transactions for celebrities and companies. Hallinan's recent successes include advising on strategic partnerships for the Kardashian-Jenner family and leading Cooley teams in significant mergers and acquisitions, such as Amass Brands' acquisition of Winc. His leadership fosters impactful outcomes, evident in Tasso's \$100-million Series B financing and Sunbasket's merger with Pruvit. He has led multiple pro bono initiatives at Cooley, including an adoption clinic and representation of companies led by people from historically underserved groups.

Taylor Hathaway-Zepeda

Partner | *Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP*



Taylor Hathaway-Zepeda is a partner at Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher in Los Angeles, specializing in mergers, acquisitions, joint ventures and corporate governance across diverse industries, with a focus on media, entertainment and technology sectors. Recent highlights include representing The North Road Company in its formation and various high-profile investments, advising Universal Pictures on partnerships and investments such as the merger of Blumhouse Productions and Atomic Monster and assisting The Chernin Group in platform-enhancing investments and acquisitions. Additionally, Hathaway-Zepeda played a pivotal role in Block Inc.'s acquisition of Tidal, Jay-Z's streaming platform. Her extensive expertise spans from celebrity partnerships to major acquisitions. She holds a law degree from Harvard Law School and has served in leadership roles in various prestigious organizations.

Ron Hess

Vice President | *Momentous Insurance Brokerage, a Marsh & McLennan Agency LLC Company*



Ron Hess transitioned from film and television production to the insurance industry, driven by a desire to enhance insurance services for entertainment. With firsthand experience, he identified opportunities to streamline risk assessment, crucial for fast-paced productions and tours. Hess joined a leading brokerage, introducing tailored risk management solutions for

short-term and low-budget productions, previously accessible only to major studios. His innovative approach gained traction, attracting prominent studios, festivals and touring musicians. While maintaining a focus on entertainment insurance, Hess' expertise expanded to diverse sectors, including high-net-worth clientele, experiential marketing, special effects and firearms industries. He has demonstrated a versatile and creative approach across unconventional business disciplines.

Kevin D. Holmes

Partner, CPA | *Withum*

Kevin D. Holmes, a seasoned business advisory and audit partner, brings three decades of expertise serving high-profile talent, business management firms and entities in entertainment and various industries. He specializes in risk and fraud-based internal control assessments, aiding A-list entertainers and business management firms in fraud prevention and detection. Holmes played pivotal roles in two successful accounting industry mergers and conducted internal training seminars on internal controls. His leadership extends to building and mentoring strong teams. Certified by the AICPA, he holds expertise in COSO Internal Control and Cybersecurity Advisory Services. Holmes' community engagement includes board positions in organizations like the College of the Canyons Foundation and the Santa Clarita Valley Chamber of Commerce, showcasing his commitment to philanthropy and local community development.



Carolyn Hunt

Partner
Barnes & Thornburg LLP



Carolyn Hunt offers extensive legal and business counsel in entertainment

financing, having facilitated funding for numerous award-winning film, television and gaming projects. Her expertise spans single-project financing, capital raises, slate transactions and incentivized financing structures, benefiting clients like Lionsgate Entertainment, IMAX and Natixis. Hunt's recent successes include securing financing for Gala Media Capital amidst the 2023 actors' strike, funding family-oriented genre films and facilitating production loans for projects. Her track record also includes orchestrating entertainment corporate facilities for Lionsgate Entertainment and FilmNation Entertainment, showcasing her proficiency in navigating complex financing landscapes within the entertainment industry.

Robert L. Kahan has over 50 years of corporate transactional law practice in Los Angeles, specializing in mergers and acquisitions, franchising and licensing. He focuses primarily on representing A-list entertainment and lifestyle executives, celebrities and influencers in various business transactions, enhancing their companies' growth. Operating discreetly, Kahan supplements entertainment lawyers and wealth managers, providing seamless full-service legal support. His achievements include facilitating the formation of AME, representing Suzanne Somers Companies in multiple ventures. His recent successes involve assisting Academy Award winners in sports franchise ownership and theater property acquisition, among others. Kahan's leadership extends to mentoring young attorneys at Blank Rome and contributing to various legal and community organizations.

Robert L. Kahan

Partner,
Corporate Law
Blank Rome LLP





Wayne Kamemoto
Partner–Practice
Leader, Music
Citrin Cooperman

A seasoned professional with over 25 years of experience in music and entertainment business management, Wayne Kamemoto has led Citrin Cooperman’s music practice nationally since 2023. A CPA and CGMA, he specializes in accounting and consulting services for artists, tours and music festivals. Previously with top entertainment firms, Kamemoto joined Citrin Cooperman for its historic music ties. He oversees a team of partners and directors across the country, setting protocols, managing staffing and serving a diverse clientele from emerging artists to Rock and Roll Hall of Famers. Kamemoto is known for his integrity and artist-friendly approach. Beyond his professional achievements, he coaches youth basketball and mentors aspiring entertainment professionals, while also contributing to philanthropic causes like pediatric cancer research and MusiCares.

Michael Karlin, a founding partner of NKSFB, oversees the financial affairs of clients, including business executives, real estate developers and entertainment industry professionals. He facilitated the sale of clients’ music publishing catalogs and played a key role in closing a client’s podcast business. A member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) and the California Society of Certified Public Accountants (CalCPA), he holds a Bachelor of Science in accounting and a Master of Taxation from the University of Southern California. Karlin sits on the boards of the Motion Picture and Television Fund, the Westcoast Sports Associates and the Matthew Silverman Memorial Foundation and serves on the board of advisors for USC’s Leventhal School of Accounting.



Michael David Karlin
Founding Partner
NKSFB, LLC



Peter Laurence Kaufman
Partner | *Kaufman Abdel-Aal LLP*

Peter Kaufman, a partner at Kaufman Abdel-Aal LLP, specializes in entertainment and media law, focusing on finance, production and distribution. He serves on arbitration panels for the Independent Film and Television Alliance (IFTA) and American Arbitration Association (AAA) and is active in industry organizations, like the Producers Guild of America and the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences. His leadership extends to community engagements and media commentary, notably on topics like crowdfunding and talent negotiations. Past roles include general counsel for ComedyWorld.com and VP roles at Film Roman and LIVE Entertainment Inc. Kaufman holds a B.A. from Emory University and a J.D. from Boston University School of Law. Recently, he played a pivotal role in financing the film “Manodrome” during industry challenges like the pandemic and labor strikes.



Philip M. Kelly
Named Partner | *Kendall Brill & Kelly LLP*

Phil Kelly is a prominent Hollywood litigator, renowned for victories involving major industry players like Paramount Global and NBCUniversal. He is recognized by Chambers & Partners USA as one of California’s leading media and entertainment litigators. In complex multi-million-dollar litigations, he excels in copyright infringement, film finance and intellectual property disputes. Kelly’s successes include securing a \$16-million award for Paramount Licensing and defeating a \$15-million claim. He’s represented CBS Broadcasting and Lionsgate, securing favorable outcomes. Currently, he’s involved in high-profile cases with Paramount Global and Lionsgate. Beyond litigation, Kelly offers strategic pre-litigation counsel. As a board member of Inner City Law Center, he contributes pro bono work and his expertise extends to speaking engagements, including at the Practising Law Institute’s “Technotainment” seminar.

Congratulations to our Co-Chair **Arash Khalili** and partner **Scott Edel** for being recognized as 2024 Business of Entertainment Visionaries by *L.A. Times B2B Publishing* in *The Envelope* magazine.

We applaud your remarkable professional achievements and innovative approach within the entertainment industry and beyond.



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HONG KONG

Arash Khalili

Co-Chair;
Corporate & Capital
Markets Co-Chair
Loeb & Loeb LLP

Arash Khalili, recently appointed co-chair at Loeb & Loeb, is a leading dealmaker known for navigating complex corporate transactions across diverse industries such as media, technology, fashion, entertainment and sports. As co-chair of the capital markets and corporate department, he advises renowned companies and individuals, structuring intricate deals both nationally and internationally. Noteworthy transactions include Vin Di Bona Productions' majority stake sale, Philpott Meeks' acquisition by NFP and Lionel Richie's brand ambassador partnership with Acrisure. Khalili's expertise extends to advising prominent figures in the sports and entertainment world. Active in the legal community, he contributes to the Los Angeles County Bar Association and other professional organizations, while speaking on key legal issues in media and entertainment.

Peter Klass, CFE, leads GHJ's profit participation services practice, renowned for its expertise in profit participation audits within the entertainment sector. Promoted to partner in 2022, his exclusive dedication to the industry highlights his leadership. Co-authoring the third edition of "Movie Money: Understanding Hollywood's (Creative) Accounting Practices," he demystifies the complex financial landscape. With eight years at Sony before GHJ, Klass brings extensive industry experience. His strategic foresight in adapting business models to digital distribution channels ensures client preparedness. Beyond his professional endeavors, he is deeply committed to community service, supporting organizations like the Boys and Girls Club and L.A. Regional Food Bank. Through educational initiatives and mentorship, Klass prepares the next generation of financial professionals for industry challenges.



Peter Klass

Partner
GHJ

David P. Lefebvre

Special Counsel | *Covington & Burling LLP*



David P. Lefebvre advises prominent media and entertainment entities, tech firms and content owners on content licensing and distribution agreements, covering various platforms and business models. His expertise spans drafting commercial agreements for television and video program licensing, cable network affiliation, sports telecast rights and new media distribution. Notable clients include Disney, AMC Networks and Paramount. Additionally, Lefebvre facilitated multi-year renewal agreements for AMC Networks with Charter and Bell Canada, optimizing distribution strategies. Beyond his professional commitments, he provides pro bono legal assistance, including adoption proceedings and immigration petitions.

Stacy Marcus

Partner, Media, Sport and Entertainment Sector | *DLA Piper*



Stacy Marcus, the first woman to serve as chief negotiator for the advertising industry's Joint Policy Committee (JPC), has led negotiations with SAG-AFTRA for over 15 years, overseeing the \$3+ billion commercial contracts. She is also a trustee for the SAG-AFTRA Health Plan and SAG-Producers Pension Plan and co-trustee for the Industry Advancement Cooperative Fund. In 2023, Marcus orchestrated the transition to a historic new Commercials Contract structure and negotiated COVID-19 safety protocols. Previously at Reed Smith, she headed the advertising subsector group, advising on advertising and entertainment law. Notable achievements include negotiating major brand and sports partnerships, celebrity endorsement deals and advising on viral campaigns. Marcus' contributions have earned her accolades such as Ad Age's 40 Under 40 list and inclusion in The Best Lawyers in America®.

Glen Mastroberte

Partner | *Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP*



Glen Mastroberte is a seasoned entertainment lawyer with a diverse practice spanning studios, production companies, music labels and gaming companies. He handles legal and business aspects of media and entertainment industries, including financing, production, licensing and distribution. Mastroberte recently has facilitated headline-grabbing transactions such as Reliance Industries Limited's \$8.5-billion joint venture,

AGBO's transformative fundraising and Embracer Group AB's acquisition of Middle-earth Enterprises. He also represented OVO Sound and DJ Khaled Productions in music transactions and Sybo Games ApS and Rovio Entertainment in gaming licensing deals. Moreover, Mastroberte led significant deals in the sports agency industry, including Athletes First's acquisition by MASTRY Ventures and General Catalyst. He actively engages in pro bono initiatives and mentors aspiring legal professionals.

Jordan Matthews

Partner | *Weinberg Gonser LLP*

Jordan Matthews, an accomplished business trial lawyer and litigator, specializes in the entertainment industry and business sector. Notably, he was lead counsel against casino mogul, Steve Wynn, arising out of sexual misconduct allegations leading to his resignation as chairman and CEO of Wynn Resorts, \$65 million in total fines and his removal as an officer and executive in the gaming industry. Matthews represents various investors and producers in disputes over A-list motion pictures, and he recently secured a judgment for a client, where the court awarded punitive damages equal to 100% of the compensatory damages award. He has a background in film finance and production, having successfully raised capital for feature films, orchestrating several slate financing deals valued at approximately \$600 million.



Justin McCurdy

Managing Director &
Financial Advisor
Manhattan West



Justin McCurdy, recently promoted to managing director at Manhattan West embodies the firm's values of excellence, innovation, inclusion and integrity. His entertainment and sports practice has prominent clients including musicians, producers and figures from the NBA, NFL and boxing, such as one Hall of Fame boxer renowned for his undefeated record and world championships. McCurdy prioritizes client education, transparency and leveraging Manhattan West's resources for tailored wealth management solutions. A Certified Financial Planner, he assists clients in retirement, tax, estate planning, budgeting and investment management. With a background at Morgan Stanley and founding ProSkills Basketball, McCurdy is committed to diversity in finance, mentoring aspiring advisors of color and advocating for inclusion in the industry.

Devin McRae is an experienced business litigator specializing in entertainment, intellectual property and partnership disputes. He represents a diverse clientele including artists, production companies and talent agencies. McRae represents clients in sensitive cases involving abuse and domestic violence within the entertainment industry. His recent cases include representing authors, actors and industry professionals in high-profile conflicts, such as the lawsuit against Verve executives and disputes over film rights and copyright. McRae's accolades include recognition in Southern California Super Lawyers and The Best Lawyers in America®. He's known for securing significant verdicts, including a multi-million dollar win for actress Shannen Doherty. With a background at prestigious firms and a law degree from UCLA, McRae brings extensive trial experience to his practice at Early Sullivan.

Devin McRae

Partner
*Early Sullivan
Wright Gizer
& McRae LLP*



Michael Meschures

Partner
MGO

A second-generation business manager and director at MGO, Michael Meschures has

over a decade of experience in business management and works with clients in entertainment, sports and media as well as high-net-worth families and executives. As a business management leader, his team excels at steering clients toward wealth preservation, adeptly addressing daily challenges, both minor and major, and making informed financial decisions. Meschures has been an integral component in developing critical relationships and growing the entertainment, sports and media practice at MGO. Outside of work, he actively contributes to his community by serving as a board member for America Needs You, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting economic mobility for low-income, first-generation college students through mentorship and career development programs.

Alissa Miller, a distinguished finance lawyer specializing in entertainment, serves as a partner at Akin Gump. In her role, she manages high-profile deals between independent film production companies and financial institutions. Named partner in charge of Akin's Los Angeles office in 2022, she advocates for the entertainment sector amidst significant disruptions. Miller is renowned for her work with major financial institutions, overseeing deals for prominent projects such as those with A24, Netflix and ABC Television. She assisted independent production companies affected by pandemic-related shutdowns, leading to the establishment of the American Coalition for Independent Content Production. Miller's recent achievements include representing lenders in multi-million-dollar credit facilities and contributing as a thought leader in media and entertainment discussions.



Alissa Miller

Partner
Akin



Darrell D. Miller

Founding Chair of the Entertainment & Sports Law Department
Fox Rothschild LLP

Darrell Miller, founding chair of Fox Rothschild's entertainment & sports department and managing partner of its Los Angeles office, is a highly regarded entertainment attorney. With over 30 years of experience, he represents esteemed Hollywood talents like Angela Bassett, Da'Vine Joy Randolph and Taylor Tomlinson. He is known for his leadership in industry organizations like the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences and the Black Entertainment & Sports Lawyers Association, earning him a place in their hall of fame. Over the past 24 months, he has secured significant deals for clients, including Randolph's Oscar-winning role and Tomlinson's late-night show on CBS. Miller's expertise extends to diverse creators and executives, contributing to their sustainable careers in an evolving industry landscape.

Harley J. Neuman

Partner & Founder | Neuman + Associates

Harley Neuman has over 30 years of experience in business management, representing top names in the entertainment industry. He graduated magna cum laude from San Diego State University with a B.S. in business administration, majoring in accounting. Neuman began his career at Deloitte Haskins & Sells, where he led the entertainment industry practice. In 1991, he founded Neuman + Associates, a business management firm that merged with NKSFB in 2019. He is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the California Society of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) as well as the California Society of CPAs, where he chaired the annual Entertainment Industry Conference in Los Angeles. Neuman serves on the board of directors of the Ellen DeGeneres Wildlife Fund and participates in several other nonprofits.



Trusted Advisors to the Entertainment Industry

For more than 40 years CBIZ has served as a trusted advisor to Los Angeles' independent film and TV producers, directors, writers, film distributors, production and postproduction services, and more. We provide a wide range of tailored financial services, that include tax structuring and planning, family office services, and business management.

Our clients receive local, highly specialized services backed by the resources of one of the nation's largest financial services providers. **Contact us today to meet Your Team.**



Cheryl Calhoun
Managing Director



Jim Parks
Managing Director

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Quincy Newell

Founder & Managing Attorney
Newell Law Firm PC

Quincy Newell has over 30 years of experience in the entertainment and media industry. He has held senior executive roles at companies like Warner Music Group's Rhino Entertainment, Codeblack Films/Lionsgate and Hidden Empire Film Group. He has negotiated numerous transactions for celebrities and production companies, including Kevin Hart and Floyd Mayweather Jr. As a producer, he has over 20 credits, including Kevin Hart's "Laugh at My Pain" and T.D. Jakes' "Woman Thou Art Loosed: On the 7th Day," earning an NAACP Image Award nomination. Newell holds a J.D. from the University of West Los Angeles and an M.B.A. from Pepperdine University, where he is also an adjunct professor and board member. Outside of his work, he is also involved in several nonprofit boards and is a member of the Producers Guild of America.

Anthony "Tony" J. Oncidi is the co-chair of Proskauer's labor & employment law department and leads the West Coast labor & employment group. With decades of experience, he represents major entertainment and media clients, including the GRAMMYS, Viacom/Paramount Pictures, FOX, Sony Music, the NBA, the NFL and Creative Artists Agency. Oncidi is renowned for his success in high-stakes employment law cases and his influence on industry practices. He frequently appears as a guest on news programs. He also serves as an adjunct professor at USC and UCLA Law Schools and speaks for various legal organizations. Oncidi has authored several legal publications and received numerous awards, including Billboard's Top Music Lawyers. He also engages in pro bono work and serves on several nonprofit boards.

Anthony Oncidi

Co-Chair, Labor & Employment Law Department
Proskauer Rose LLP

Mark Pariser

CPA/Partner | *Dunn | Pariser | Peyrot*

Mark Pariser is the go-to financial manager for CEOs and celebrities leading Dunn, Pariser & Peyrot's financial team. Known for his proactive style, he ensures clients' financial stability and growth, allowing them to focus on their careers and personal lives. Pariser specializes in budgeting, cash flow, insurance review and estate and tax planning. His clientele includes Hollywood actors, directors, international executives and entrepreneurs.

He joined the Songwriters of North America (SONA) board of directors in 2020 and works with Manifest Works on compliance issues. Pariser's notable clients include a prominent music video director, the band Blue October, rapper Leikeli 47 and film/TV producer Matthew Tolmach. He advises on tax structuring, financial planning, estate planning and business management across various industries.

James R. Parks

Executive Director | *CBIZ MHM, LLC*

James R. Parks, a CPA with over 40 years of experience, co-founded Parks, Palmer, Turner & Yemendjian, which was later acquired by CBIZ. He leads CBIZ MHM LLC's Los Angeles office, overseeing the business management and family office practice and the Western Region high-net-worth client service group. Parks has extensive tax, business management and litigation consulting experience with Fortune 500 companies and high-net-worth individuals. He facilitated the William H. Holder Chair in Accounting Endowment Fund at USC, where the Master of Business Taxation program was renamed in honor of him and his late wife. Parks has served as a tax expert for the U.S. Department of Justice and as an expert witness in various legal proceedings. Also, he successfully turned around and sold Laser Pacific Media Corporation as well as led the rescue and reopening of Hotel Barriere Fouquet's in New York.

Jonathan Stuart Pink

Global Chair Entertainment, Media & Sports Practice
Lewis Brisbois LLP

For nearly 30 years, Jonathan Pink has been a prominent advocate and mentor for clients in the entertainment industry. Transitioning from a career as a syndicated cartoonist and screenwriter, he became a lawyer specializing in intellectual property representing major names in music, visual arts and film. Starting as a law clerk at Fox News and the U.S. Attorney's Office, Pink moved to

a small firm before joining big law in 2004. His clients include Tina Turner, Tame Impala and The Black Eyed Peas. Recognized with the California State Bar's 2015 Intellectual Property Vanguard Award, he has been featured in top media outlets. He has reclaimed significant copyrights for clients, defended intellectual property rights and mentored young attorneys. Some of his notable cases include defending The Black Eyed Peas and securing Ike Turner's catalog rights.

Robyn R. Polashuk

Partner & Co-Chair of Media & Entertainment Industry Group
Covington & Burling LLP

Robyn Polashuk, co-chair of Covington's entertainment and media industry group, boasts over 20 years of experience in network distribution and content licensing. Advising major networks like AMC Networks, The Walt Disney Company and Paramount Global, she specializes in high-profile distribution agreements for both traditional and online platforms. Notably, Polashuk played a pivotal role in Disney's \$8.5-billion merger of Star India with Reliance's Viacom18 and Disney's groundbreaking carriage deal with Charter Spectrum, hailed as transformative for the television industry. She also assisted Fox Corporation in renewing its agreement with a top-five pay television distributor. Recognized for her expertise, Polashuk has been honored with awards such as Cablefax's Most Powerful Women and Variety's Legal Impact Report.

Derek Van Powell

Director
Altman Solon

Derek Powell, director at Altman Solon, boasts over 20 years of experience in media & entertainment

transformation. He specializes in growth strategies, cost programs and emerging tech integration. Notable roles include being the senior manager at Deloitte, SVP at Sony and SVP/GM at Warner Bros. Powell founded Altman Solon's Black employees group, focusing on diversity and allyship. His expertise spans strategic planning, digital operations and post-merger integration. He spearheads global studies on tech adoption in media. Powell mentors students and fosters diversity in the industry through conferences and alumni groups. He serves on boards like A Thousand Joys and the Debbie Allen Dance Academy, empowering underprivileged communities. Committed to education, he mentors students and supports alma maters like UC Irvine. Powell's a thought leader with over 20 articles and speaks at industry events globally.

Erin L. Prouty, partner at Lagerlof, LLP, specializes in estate planning, trust administration and probate litigation. With over 35 years of experience, she's a trusted advisor to high-profile entertainment clients, maintaining their privacy while managing complex matters. Certified by the State Bar of California, Prouty is recognized as a top lawyer by Best Lawyers Magazine and Los Angeles Magazine. She serves on the board of governors of the Beverly Hills Bar Association and lectures at USC and UCLA. As managing attorney of Lagerlof's El Segundo office, Prouty mentors younger attorneys and teaches as an adjunct professor, shaping the future of the legal profession with integrity and skill. Beyond her legal expertise, she is an accomplished beach volleyball player and classical musician.

Erin L. Prouty

Partner
Lagerlof, LLP

Elsa Ramo

Founder &
Managing Partner
Ramo Law PC

Elsa Ramo, founder and managing partner of Ramo Law, leads a pioneering firm specializing in entertainment dealmaking. With over 22 attorneys across N.Y. and L.A., with the majority being female partners, her firm prioritizes diversity and inclusion. Ramo is acclaimed for negotiating deals across emerging and established sectors, benefiting clients like Imagine Entertainment and independent producers such as Yale Entertainment. As a producer with Vested Interest, she's behind acclaimed projects like "Joyland" and "The Card Counter." She contributes to Forbes.com, advocates for women in entertainment through PEFA and educates through Sundance Collab. Ramo's impact extends beyond law, earning her recognition in Variety's Legal Impact Report and Daily Journal's Top 100 Women Lawyers. Nominated for L.A. Times B2B Publishing's Inspirational Women Awards, her firm is celebrated for its excellence by the Los Angeles Business Journal.

Michael Rhodes, a nationally recognized trial lawyer in entertainment, represents industry giants like the Kardashian-Jenner family, Justin and Hailey Bieber, Madonna and others. He's lauded for his victories, which include defending the Kardashian-Jenner family against a \$100-million defamation claim. As outside counsel for Justin Bieber, Rhodes facilitated a \$200-million music rights deal. He also advises on high-stakes matters for entities like Google and Facebook. With 36 years at Cooley, he's held leadership roles and garnered numerous accolades, including The American Lawyer Litigator of the Year and Chambers USA's Top Lawyer. Committed to his community, Rhodes serves as a legal advisor to Sonoma County nonprofits.



Michael Rhodes

Partner
Cooley LLP

Vanessa Roman

Partner | *Akin*



Vanessa Roman, a key figure on Akin's esteemed entertainment team, is highly regarded across the industry for her dealmaking prowess. She advises top financial institutions like Comerica Bank and MUFG Bank on multi-million-dollar financing for major film and TV projects. Her pro bono work includes aiding institutions like the American Film Institute and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. Roman's achievements have earned her recognition in Variety's Legal Impact and Dealmakers Impact Reports, as well as Euromoney Expert Guides and The Legal 500 U.S. Recent notable deals include securing financing for Electric Entertainment and Participant Media. She also sits on the board of Female Executives in Media and Entertainment, championing women in the industry and mentoring emerging talent.

Marissa Román Griffith

Partner | *Akin*



Marissa Román Griffith, a prominent figure at Akin's Los Angeles office, is highly respected in the entertainment industry, handling multi-million-dollar deals for major players like Comerica Bank and MUFG Union Bank. Recognized for her impactful work, she has been featured in Variety's Dealmakers Impact and Legal Impact Reports, The Hollywood Reporter's Top 100 Power Lawyers series and more. Notable recent projects include securing financing for Entertainment Studios Motion Pictures and advising MRC on output agreements and production activities. Griffith is deeply committed to diversity and inclusion serving on Akin's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Council, co-chairing the Latinx Firmwide Resource Group and mentoring summer associates. She is also actively involved in promoting women in the industry through initiatives like the Women Executives in Entertainment Network.

Congratulations!

Joseph Rust
Thomas F. Smith

for being recognized as 2024 Business of Entertainment Visionaries

Thank you for continuing the tradition of unparalleled, people-first service. Cheers to all of this year's honorees!

We understand the complexities and challenges of the entertainment and music industry. Prager Metis has specialized in accounting and advisory services for the entertainment and music industry since its inception, over 100 years ago.



Aaron Daniel Rosenberg

Partner
*Myman Greenspan
Fox Rosenberg
Mobasser Younger
& Light LLP*

Aaron D. Rosenberg is a Los Angeles-based entertainment attorney representing high-profile clients in music, film, TV and social media, including Ariana Grande, Jennifer Lopez, John Legend, Meghan Trainor and Troye Sivan. He is a named partner at Myman Greenspan Fox Rosenberg Mobasser Younger & Light LLP, the youngest in the firm's history. Before joining in 2006, Rosenberg was an associate at Greenberg Traurig LLP. He is active on several national boards fighting hate and preserving equal rights, including the Anti-Defamation League. Notable deals include Tate McRae's chart-topping album, John Legend's Pfizer campaign and Ariana Grande's role in "Wicked." Rosenberg obtained his undergraduate education at Harvard in 1999 and then went to Harvard Law in 2002.

Kristina Royce, a renowned family law attorney, garners recognition as a "Troubleshooter" by The Hollywood Reporter for her adept handling of high-profile matrimonial disputes. With over two decades of experience, she's represented celebrities like Arnold Schwarzenegger, Elizabeth Chambers and Channing Tatum, prioritizing privacy and resolution in sensitive cases. As co-chair of Blank Rome's matrimonial & family law practice, Royce oversees a team of 35 attorneys, guiding them with her expertise while managing a substantial caseload. Her strategic approach emphasizes mediation and discretion, steering clear of contentious litigation. Royce's accolades include listings in Chambers USA, Variety's Legal Impact Report and Los Angeles Business Journal's Top 100 Lawyer.



Kristina Royce

Partner and
Co-Chair of the
Matrimonial & Family
Law Practice
Blank Rome LLP

Joseph Rust

Chief Strategic Innovation Officer | *Prager Metis*



Joseph Rust is a partner in the advisory services department at Prager Metis and a member of the Prager Metis International Group. He serves as chief strategic innovation officer and managing partner for the Western Region, overseeing strategic focus and execution. With over three decades of experience, Rust specializes in the entertainment industry, offering expertise in royalty and profit participation examinations, copyright valuations and financial due diligence. He began his career in 1984 and joined Prager Metis in 1994, opening the Wilshire office. He now oversees five offices in California and Nevada. Outside of Prager Metis, Rust is an active community member, supporting the Alzheimer's Association California Southland. He is also recognized as a thought leader, frequently speaking on AI's impact on the music industry.

Neema T. Sahni

Partner | *Covington & Burling LLP*




Neema Sahni, partner and co-chair of Covington's entertainment and media industry group and its commercial litigation practice, is a sought-after counsel for major industry players. With extensive experience from her tenure at The Walt Disney Company, she excels in managing legal challenges for high-profile clients like Disney, Paramount Global, Netflix and the NFL. Sahni co-chairs Covington's Music Industry Initiative and is the vice chair of its sports industry group; some of her notable cases include representing Netflix in a copyright dispute with Evil Genius Games and winning a "bump-up" exclusion coverage case for Shari Redstone post the Viacom-CBS merger. She also successfully defended Paramount Global against a franchise fee lawsuit. Some of Sahni's accolades include recognition in Variety's Legal Impact Report three years in a row, Billboard's Top Music Lawyers, The Hollywood Reporter's Power Lawyers and Law360's Media & Entertainment Rising Star.

2024 Business of
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Withum congratulates Kevin Holmes, CPA,
for being recognized as a 2024 Business of
Entertainment Visionary by L.A. Times B2B
Publishing in the Envelope Magazine.

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Francois Maximilian Schramek
Managing Director & Financial Advisor
Manhattan West

Francois Maximilian Schramek, CFA, managing director at Manhattan West, has nearly 20 years of experience advising UHNW individuals and institutions, including entertainment figures such as athletes, actors and singers, with an expertise that spans investment allocation, multi-generational wealth strategies and holistic financial planning. His global perspective, shaped by his travels to over 130 countries, enhances his advisory capabilities. Fluent in English, French, German and Spanish, Schramek skillfully navigates international complexities, enabling client expansions into Europe and the Middle East. He holds FINRA Series 7, 63 and 65 licenses and focuses on entertainment, AI, energy transition and space exploration, managing investments ranging from \$5 to \$100 million, with a sweet spot of \$10 to \$20 million.

David Shaheen leads the media & communications group for global corporate banking at J.P. Morgan, where he has spent 15 years directing the entertainment client coverage team. Specializing in global advisory and financing services, his expertise spans film, television, music, live entertainment, video games and agencies. Under Shaheen's leadership, J.P. Morgan has become a leading arranger of financings across the content landscape, with noteworthy transactions including significant deals for Regency Entertainment, Skydance Media, Hasbro, AppLovin Corporation, United Talent Agency, Concord Music and Wasserman Media. In April 2024, he was promoted to head of the expanded global corporate banking unit, underscoring his pivotal role in the firm's global banking growth.



David Shaheen
Head of Media & Communications,
Global Corporate Banking
J.P. Morgan



Maytal Shainberg
Managing Director, New Media Group | *East West Bank*

Maytal Shainberg began her career focused on venture capital-backed digital advertising startups, where she developed strong competencies around the publishing, user experience and video categories. In 2015, she joined fintech startup FastPay, where she created the company's sales strategy and led a 15-person team focused on enterprise clients. Today, Shainberg leads East West Bank's new media lending group, leveraging her 15+ years of experience in the new media, advertising and technology industries. Her customer base spans mobile games, podcasts, adtech, social media and multi-channel network businesses. Shainberg's top customers include Scopely, Tastemade, Channel Factory, VideoAmp and Sovrn. Some of her accomplishments include structuring and agenting a \$500-million senior credit facility to a mobile gaming company and leading several \$100-million facilities in new media spaces.

Thomas F. Smith
Partner | *Prager Metis*



Thomas Smith, a partner at Prager Metis CPAs and a member of Prager Metis International, also serves as partner-in-charge of the entertainment and music group. With over 25 years of experience in the accounting industry, he leads a global team, leveraging local and international expertise from the London office and GGI Affiliates. Since becoming partner-in-charge in 2021, Smith has guided the strategic focus and execution across various sectors, including sports, entertainment, art galleries, music and media. Outside of Prager, he actively participates in philanthropic efforts, serving as the team captain for the Alzheimer's Westport Connecticut Walk. His involvement with an invite-only entertainment network has expanded the firm's industry relationships and positioned Prager Metis as a leader in the entertainment sector. Smith is a recognized thought leader, frequently featured on industry panels.



Mary Craig Calkins





Robert L. Kahan





Kristina Royce



Congratulations to our partners
Mary Craig Calkins (Insurance Recovery),
Robert L. Kahan (Corporate), and
Kristina Royce (Matrimonial & Family Law)
for being recognized as 2024
“Business of Entertainment Visionaries”
by *L.A. Times B2B Publishing*.

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Stanton Stein

Partner and
Head of Media &
Entertainment Group
Russ August & Kabat

Stanton "Larry" Stein, as head of Russ August & Kabat's media & entertainment group, provides comprehensive legal counsel to a diverse array of clients in the entertainment industry, including actors, writers, directors, musicians and production companies. Renowned for his groundbreaking work challenging studio accounting practices, he has reshaped industry standards, earning accolades such as being named a "Top Media and Entertainment Litigator" by Chambers USA and a "Legal Legend" by The Hollywood Reporter. Some of Stein's notable representations include Drake, Simon Cowell, DJ Khaled and the estate of Donna Summer. A graduate of USC School of Law and a former adjunct professor of entertainment law at USC Gould School of Law and Stanford Law School, his expertise spans high-stakes litigation, contract negotiations and intellectual property matters.

Bryan M. Sullivan, partner at Early Sullivan Wright Gizer McRae LLP, is renowned for his strategic legal counsel. With a distinguished reputation among celebrities, he has been instrumental in representing prominent figures like entertainment lawyer Kevin Morris and Hunter Biden in complex legal matters. Additionally, Sullivan advocates for clients such as Olivia Munn in combating deepfake AI-generated content and advises Enderby Entertainment in pioneering ventures like the distribution of full-length feature films as NFTs. Recognized for his outstanding contributions, he has been featured in Variety's Legal Impact Report and named in The Best Lawyers in America® for commercial transactions/UCC law and entertainment law. Moreover, Sullivan's dedication extends beyond the legal realm, as evidenced by his active involvement in nonprofit activism and political campaigns.

Bryan M. Sullivan

Partner
*Early Sullivan
Wright Gizer
& McRae LLP*

Bryan Thompson

Partner | *Barnes & Thornburg LLP*



Bryan Thompson, a partner in Barnes & Thornburg's Los Angeles office, brings extensive expertise in corporate and entertainment law to his practice. Prior to joining, he held senior positions in business and legal affairs at Fox Networks Group and Yahoo! Inc., gaining invaluable experience in both traditional and digital media landscapes. Notable recent transactions include representing Adam Bold in the sale of A3 Artists Agency's digital and alternative divisions to Gersh and advising Peyton Manning and Omaha Productions on a range of projects, including the Manningcast and various podcast initiatives. Additionally, Thompson has worked with Sony Interactive, Lisa Erspamer/Erspamer Productions, Culture Genesis, TV One, FiveCurrents, Kaleidoco and Code Entertainment on a diverse array of entertainment deals and productions.

Alla Vardanyan

Director of Specialty Sales | *First Entertainment Credit Union*

Alla Vardanyan, director of specialty sales, leads the virtual sales, business and A-list services at First Entertainment Credit Union. With over 12 years of experience in the financial industry and a combined portfolio of 3,700 entertainment members, she has played a crucial role in supporting consumers within the credit union and banking sectors and significantly contributed to First Entertainment's success. As an inspirational leader committed to member service, Vardanyan actively supports the credit union's strategies by prioritizing member needs and engaging with their individual stories. Fully embodying the organization's core values, she actively participates in community and business events, including the most recent Art Directors Guild Awards Gala as well as receptions on the Warner Bros. Discovery, Paramount and Sony studio lot locations.



JaHan Wang

EVP of Entertainment Banking | *City National Bank*



JaHan Wang is City National's executive vice president of entertainment banking and a member of the company's senior management team. His team of banking professionals provides custom financing, lending, investing and accounting solutions to clients in film, television, sports, Broadway theater, music and Latin entertainment. Wang has more than 30 years of banking experience. He joined City National in 2007 as a vice president and senior credit officer before becoming senior vice president and East Coast regional manager for entertainment banking in 2021. In that role, he oversaw City National's entertainment banking offices in New York, Miami, Nashville and Atlanta. Wang was named executive vice president for entertainment banking in 2023.

David Weise

Founding Partner | *David Weise & Associates*

David Weise, founding partner at David Weise & Associates, is a respected figure in the entertainment industry, boasting over 34 years of professional business management experience. Recognized as one of the top business managers in entertainment by The Hollywood Reporter, Variety and Billboard, his career trajectory has been marked by a commitment to excellence and client success. After earning his Bachelor of Science from the University of Arizona, Weise embarked on his career path, starting with a national accounting firm in 1990 before transitioning to business management in 1992. Over the years, he honed his skills and expanded his clientele, eventually founding his own firm in 1999. Under Weise's leadership, the firm experienced significant growth, culminating in the formation of David Weise & Associates, Inc. in 2005.



Pamela Weiser

EVP | Principal,
Commercial
Entertainment
*Momentous
Insurance
Brokerage, a Marsh
& McLennan Agency
LLC Company*



Pamela Weiser has been in the entertainment insurance industry since 1980 and specializes in risk management for films, music and loan-out corporations. In addition, she has acquired an expert level of knowledge in both commercial (non-entertainment) coverage and personal insurance. Weiser's expertise and ability to effectively counsel clients on the importance of appropriate asset protection have enabled her to ascend to leadership positions throughout her career. As executive vice president at Momentous she is responsible for performing coverage reviews and evaluations, client audits and development initiatives, and regulating and monitoring the firm's standard operating procedures. In addition to her experience, Weiser is also a member of the Motion Picture & Television Fund Professional Advisory Network.

Darcy Wilson-Jones leads the national media and entertainment practice at RSM US, drawing from over two decades of experience in public accounting, including a tenure at a Big Four firm. Committed to delivering exceptional client experiences, she serves as a key member of RSM's client experience national advisory group, guiding engagement teams to become first-choice advisors through a deep understanding of clients' businesses and challenges. Wilson-Jones is also dedicated to fostering diversity and inclusion within RSM, serving as the national and West Region executive sponsor of the African American and Canadian Excellence (AACE) employee network group. As a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) in California, she maintains active memberships with the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the California Society of CPAs.

Darcy Wilson-Jones

Partner
RSM US LLP



Winnie Wong

SVP, Film & Television
Momentous Insurance Brokerage, a Marsh & McLennan Agency LLC Company

Winnie Wong is the senior vice president of film & television at Momentous Insurance Brokerage, a Marsh & McLennan Agency LLC Company. With 39 years in the industry and 16 years at her current firm, she is a trailblazer known for developing an entertainment insurance book of business in a male-dominated field. A University of Pittsburgh alumna, she has authored "Hollywood Studio Production Techniques" and has spoken at various high-profile industry panels and conferences. Wong specializes in insuring independent features, television, documentaries and commercials, representing prestigious clients such as MGM and Universal Studios. She is recognized for her innovative solutions in entertainment insurance and teaching at UCLA and USC.

Anita Wu, CPA, CFE, serves as a managing director at GHJ, spearheading the profit participation services practice since 2000. With over 25 years of experience, she specializes in profit participation audits in film and television, ensuring equitable profit distribution. Wu's leadership extends to advocating for diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA), reflected in her co-founding GHJ's Women's Empowerment Cohort. She is a renowned speaker on profit participation matters, influencing industry practices and emphasizing integrity and equity. Her community engagement participation includes supporting organizations like the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Los Angeles. Wu's exceptional skills and proactive leadership have advanced GHJ's service offerings and championed transformative changes within the entertainment industry.



Anita Wu
Managing Director
GHJ



Ashley R. Yeargan

Partner | *Russ August & Kabat*

Ashley R. Yeargan, partner at Russ August & Kabat, is renowned in the community for her skills. After graduating from Yale and Stanford Law School, she joined Stanton "Larry" Stein's entertainment practice. Despite the firm's dissolution shortly after, Yeargan found herself handling high-profile cases like Tokyo Broadcasting System's copyright infringement case against ABC and Endemol. She quickly became the go-to for high-stakes matters. Over time, she developed her own practice and retained high-profile clients. Yeargan handles litigation for Drake, defending him in various cases, including the aftermath of the Astroworld Music Festival incident. Additionally, she represents Kendall Jenner's 818 Tequila and handles IP matters for the company. Yeargan's reputation has earned her recognition in publications like The Hollywood Reporter's Power Lawyers, Billboard's Top Music Lawyers and Variety.

Sophia K. Yen

Partner | *Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP Legal Services*

Sophia Yen, partner at Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP, is a distinguished dealmaker. Some of her notable recent achievements include guiding AMC in a groundbreaking distribution deal for the "Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour" concert film and assisting Kevin Hart's HARTBEAT in a capital raise from Abry Partners. Yen also spearheads high-growth initiatives for companies like Wavelength Productions, demonstrating her leadership in driving transformative growth. Beyond her legal prowess, she is actively involved in elevating the AANHPI voice in entertainment, collaborating with organizations like Gold House and serving on the Asia Society Southern California board. Yen's exceptional work has earned her recognition in The Hollywood Reporter's Power Lawyers and Variety's Dealmakers Impact Report, among other accolades, reaffirming her status as a leading figure in the industry.



Tasos Yiangou

Partner | *RSM US LLP*

Tasos Yiangou, a partner at RSM US LLP, is a seasoned leader in the technology, media and entertainment (TMT) sector, spearheading impactful strategies as the head of RSM's Southern California technology, media and entertainment industry practice. With extensive experience in auditing publicly traded companies and large multinationals, Yiangou possesses a deep understanding of the intricate financial landscape. Over the past 24 months, he has played a pivotal role in facilitating communication between RSM UK and RSM US, ensuring seamless collaboration between the two entities. With over a decade of experience gained at esteemed firms such as RSM US LLP, BDO USA, LLP and Grant Thornton, he has honed his expertise in financial management and client-centric solutions.

Dave Young

Partner | *Cooley LLP*

Dave Young, partner at Cooley LLP, is a highly respected attorney renowned for his expertise in various fields. One of his notable representations is his guidance of Kim Kardashian's SKKN through a \$200-million strategic transaction with Coty and Kylie Jenner's Kylie Cosmetics on a \$600-million business combination with Coty. His track record speaks volumes, with notable transactions that include an acquisition of RepairSmith by AutoNation and a \$200-million Series B financing round for Route. Beyond his legal practice, Young is deeply committed to community involvement. He has been a board member of ThursdayNights since 2012, a nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering connectivity and community in the L.A. innovation and growth economy.



Weinberg Gonser LLP
congratulates its partner
Jordan Matthews
for being recognized as a 2024
Business of Entertainment Visionary.

**WEINBERG
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theIndustry

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Illustration by
Alicia Tatone
For The Times

**Viewers
tune in to
free Tubi**

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Debriefing on a shocking 'West Wing' premiere

Story by
Whitney
Friedlander

Thomas Schlamme explains how even the creators were not sure how the Season 2 assassination plot would unfold.



Writers and
directors
reflect on the
making of their
Emmy-winning
episodes.

JUST AS WITH REAL-LIFE ASSASSINATION ATTEMPTS, TO REALLY understand the power of "The West Wing's" two-part Season 2 premiere, "In the Shadow of Two Gunmen," requires a look back at the actions before the attack. In this case, it would be the NBC show's Season 1 finale, "What Kind of Day Has It Been," a cliffhanger that, in the nascent days of prestige-TV watching and analysis from fan sites like Television Without Pity, meant so-called Wingnuts spent a summer obsessing over their VCR recordings like they were the Zapruder film. Who of President Bartlet's (Martin Sheen) employees was taken down by surprise gunfire? Was it the commander in chief himself? His daughter Zoey (Elisabeth Moss)? Her boyfriend, Charlie (Dulé Hill)? What about the footage of deputy communications director Sam Seaborn (Rob Lowe) rushing as press secretary C.J. Cregg (Allison Janney) is pushed to the ground? And where is communications director Toby Ziegler (Richard Schiff)? ¶ "West Wing" executive producer Thomas Schlamme helmed all three episodes, winning the Emmy for directing for a drama series for the Season 2 doubleheader. He'd also share in the show's drama series win that year, which would end up being its second of four consecutive victories in the category. ¶ But directing both the closing and opening episodes didn't necessarily make his job any easier. ¶ "When we were going into the finale of Season 1, we knew that this was not an assassination to the president," Schlamme recalls. However, "What we didn't know, and what Aaron [Sorkin, the series' creator] didn't know — and was so kind to inform me before we started shooting — was who would get hit, if anyone. But, probably, somebody would get shot." ¶ For Schlamme and his crew, this meant grabbing fragments of footage to be used in Season 1's chaotic end montage when they filmed at Washington, D.C.'s, Newseum and then returning to the scene of the crime several months later to re-create the events to coincide with Sorkin's scripts for the Season 2 premiere.

Schlamme also didn't know just how prescient these episodes would be. "West Wing's" second season would premiere in September 2000, about a year and a half after the Columbine High School massacre and two months before a heated U.S. presidential race that went all the way up to the Supreme Court. But it wasn't eligible for Emmy consideration until 2001. Schlamme and other winners at that year's Emmys would not be acknowledged until November — at a ceremony that had to be rescheduled twice in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. ¶ "Aaron has often said we weren't forcing people to eat vegetables," the director-producer says. "First and foremost, it's about what is good drama and good entertainment and a riveting piece of theater. But underneath there ... I think I was very focused on domestic terrorism and about this rage that now is just so incredibly prevalent in our country." ¶ In an interview that has been edited and condensed, Schlamme spent about an hour of yet another election year reflecting with The Envelope about these pivotal episodes.

Was the Season 1 finale intended to be a reference to the infamous "Who Shot J.R.?" cliffhanger from the 1980s nighttime soap opera "Dallas"?

It literally was not part of the conversation. It was not, "Oh, we need a cliffhanger like they did 20 years earlier on 'Dallas.'" There was no relationship between those two shows, no relationship in the way that Aaron works. In fact, we were rather surprised with the idea that it was this incredible cliffhanger. We knew it was a big moment and we wanted a big moment.

But what I remember most was having a conversation with Aaron. Because what we were surprised about, in the first season of the show, is the mail that we would get that was unbelievably supportive of the show. We would get letters from Republicans, and they would go, "We really hate your politics, but we love the show and we love these people." They really did

→ Rob Lowe and Allison Janney in "The West Wing." Director Thomas Schlamme, opposite.



get the idea that we weren't trying to force a political agenda down anybody's throat.

The only hate mail that we got was after Dulé and Elisabeth's characters kissed on-screen. I think it was 1999, and we were shocked that we did get a lot of, "How dare this African American, basically, assistant to the president, have this romantic affair with the daughter of a white president?"

I think that's what set in motion the idea of, "What if somebody wanted to shoot Charlie?" not, "We should have an assassination toward the president." That's about all we knew when we were going into the finale of Season 1.

It turns out that both Bartlet and Bradley Whitford's Josh Lyman, the deputy chief of staff, are shot. You said you didn't know who would get shot. But did you know if they would survive?

First of all, Brad and Aaron are very close friends. He wrote the part for Brad Whitford. So I don't think that he would have killed him in the very first year.

But look, there were deaths on "The West Wing." There weren't that many, but there were deaths. It was never with the thought of, "Oh, we're going to kill this character [for ratings or shock value]." It was always to drive some sort of story for a reason.

Brad's mother, [however], didn't know, and was frightened to death that not only did you shoot Brad but that he's not going to be on the show anymore.

Now we have a stereotype, for better or worse, of what a domestic terrorist "looks" like. Were there conversations then about what the shooters would look like? They are young, white men with buzz cuts.

Strangely enough, we had cast, I think, one of them earlier in an episode as just an extra in the background. And when we then started talking about whether it would be Charlie who would be the target, we went, "Remember that extra?"

If the season finale and premiere were shot at different times, how did you go back and match what you'd done before?

Difficulty is the word. If we had known everything, and it had been contemporary television, we would have shot at least that part of the next episode right there.

For me, it was, No. 1, securing the location, and that was the Newseum. So we had to let them know that we would have to come back. We only had a finite amount of time there. ... We had to be out of there, pulled plug and everything, by 6 in the morning when the sun was coming up. When Richard is finding Brad, you'll see that the sky is somewhat bluer. We didn't quite have the digital correcting software that we do now.



We were loading the trucks, we were told we had to leave and that we could not shoot anymore. We started the evening with this big production and we ended with guerrilla filmmaking. It was just myself, the [director of photography], Brad and Richard and a couple of extras. I didn't call action; I didn't do anything because they didn't know we were shooting.

In a press briefing after the shooting, Janney's C.J. makes a statement about all the people who did die from gun violence the night of the assassination attempt. Were you trying to make a political statement?

That's a very powerful speech that Allison gives [and one] that you could still hold up [as to why] we need some legislation about gun control. We weren't trying to make a statement. It's just that's what that press secretary would say about what happened that night to [shooting victims] beside the most protected person in the world.

The scene where Charlie finds out that he was the intended victim is very slow and deliberate.

If you look at the choreography of "The West Wing," it was always set up so that it would move and move and move. And then, even if it was just to get coffee, everything would come to a little bit of a halt because it's a piece of information you need.

And by the way, this goes to the theory that you don't need a lot of dialogue, especially when it's Aaron, who writes a lot of

dialogue. I think Dulé Hill, in that scene where he's told, is stunningly brilliant. I think he has three "OKs." And each one is filled with something else that he [is processing].

This is also an early episode that points to something that will be a bigger plot point later: The president has multiple sclerosis. The first lady (Stockard Channing) is a medical doctor and shares this little-known fact with his anesthesiologist in a sort of robotic, "come what may" way: This is the information you need; do what you will with it later.

There's this frenetic energy when she's running out of the White House. Also, a fun little detail here: The [man playing the] head of her security detail is a man named Willie Gault, who played for the Los Angeles Raiders and was an Olympic gold medalist. So he is literally one of the fastest human beings in the world. My only direction to Willie was, "Can you just slow down a little bit because you're so ahead of everybody else?"

But Stockard and I talked and [the direction was], "Find your daughter. And from that point on, you're a medical professional who is in a hospital with a critical patient."

It's really interesting because it's so disconnected. ... It's just business. And because Stockard's so brilliant under there, you're believing, "Holy s—, your husband was just shot. But she's got to be this doctor."

I shot that so you could see the president in the background. It's not quite an over-the-shoulder of the [anesthesiologist]. It's all on Stockard. I don't care about the doctor's reaction to this. He means nothing to me in storytelling.

You were honored with these Emmys a few years after your wife, actor Christine Lahti, made her famous Golden Globes acceptance speech after her award was announced while she was in the restroom. Do you give each other notes on award speeches?

No. Well, I'm sure Christine has gone over her speeches with me. Not because she relies on me. That's just who she is; she's very open.

I very seldom ever do that. That's not an asset. They're also embarrassing to me that I have to write them before I [might win] them.

But I spent four years being president of the Directors Guild. I've worked on negotiations. I've also given speeches, as well as Christine, politically and elsewhere. We will absolutely share that with each other.

But if we go to an awards show, I just make sure that Christine doesn't leave the table. ✉

Diversity is good for Hollywood and he has receipts to prove it

Will Packer says he's 'living proof' diverse content is good business. As his production company marks 10th anniversary, he'll keep pushing.

Story by
**Samantha
Masunaga**

WILL PACKER KNOWS THAT DIVERSITY IN movies is good business. ¶ The producer has become a standout in Hollywood, making films with mostly Black casts that cater to an underserved audience — and that audience has rewarded him for it. His 2017 film “Girls Trip,” starring Tiffany Haddish, Regina Hall, Queen Latifah and Jada Pinkett Smith, was the highest-grossing comedy of that year.



Comedies “Think Like a Man” and “Ride Along,” have seen massive success at the box office. ¶ He’s since branched out into projects for streaming, documentary features and television (both scripted and unscripted), diversifying his slate at a time when the industry is seeing upheaval in its business model. His next project is “Fight Night,” a true-story limited series for Peacock that chronicles the biggest heist in the state of Georgia’s history, starring Kevin Hart, Samuel L. Jackson and Taraji P. Henson. But Hollywood’s current contraction shouldn’t mean that diverse projects should be abandoned in favor of the bottom line, he said. ¶ “It takes folks pushing the industry to see the economic benefit of doing organically diverse content,” Packer said. “And I like to think that I’m one of the people that is doing the pushing.”

This year is the 10th anniversary of Will Packer Productions. What are you most proud of?

Sustainability and longevity in the context of a very fickle industry where not a lot of companies last that long. As the ever-changing industry has continued to shift, we have somehow been able to stay relevant and valuable to our media partners and to audiences, which is most important.

What has helped you stay relevant?

I like to think it’s because two of the things that I really try to focus on are commerciality and authenticity. We focus on things that will be appealing to our core audience and do it at a time when we realize they don’t have to consume your stuff.

It’s laughable to me how self-important as an industry we can be. And I have peers who think that if you build it, they will come. And it’s like no, not at all. Not when you’re in an oversaturated environment. Audiences want some-

CÉCILE BOKO



thing that they can't get elsewhere that feels urgent, that's loud, provocative, oftentimes — something that's going to speak to them.

What more needs to be done to diversify Hollywood?

You know, I'm an eternal optimist. There definitely has been progress — you look at the voices in front of and behind the camera, and they're more diverse than ever before. But we started from where there was such a dearth of any kind of real, authentic diversity, we have so far to go. Even though I'm optimistic, I don't have any delusions of thinking that we've turned some incredible corner. If anything, when you have a constriction of content now, studios pulling back, the first things that get cut are things that are considered, you know, diversity initiatives.

I'm living proof that diverse content is good business. Unfortunately, we're seeing it become tougher for diverse filmmakers, because it's tougher for *all* filmmakers, but it always hits the marginalized voices first and hardest. And we're seeing it now.

What projects are you excited about?

I'm on my way to set right this very minute on a project I'm very excited about called "Fight Night." It is a limited series that I'm doing for Peacock. It is a true story based on the biggest heist in Georgia's history, and one of the biggest heists in the country, actually. It happened after a Muhammad Ali fight back in 1970 when he couldn't get sanctioned to fight any-

where; he'd been blackballed because of his stance against the Vietnam War. An interesting collection of white government officials, Black entrepreneurs, promoters and, frankly, out-and-out hustlers came together to put together this unsanctioned boxing match. And afterward, there was this underground casino party that attracted celebrities, athletes, entertainers and gangsters from all over the country. And that party got robbed. We're telling the true story of that night. ✉

↑ Jada Pinkett Smith stars as Lisa in "Girls Trip," 2017's top-grossing comedy film.

→ Don Cheadle, left, and Dexter Darden in "Fight Night."



RAPID-FIRE QUESTIONS



What are you listening to now?

I'm listening to an audiobook called "Tools of Titans." Music-wise, I've been listening to the Kendrick-Drake tracks. When I work out, that's good energy. And then earlier this year, I went to Trinidad for Carnival, so I've been playing soca since then.



How do you get focused?

Focus has never been a big problem for me. I can't afford to not be focused. So, I am somebody that always has a million things going on, but I'm a very good compartmentalizer.



What do you do to relax?

Sit on the beach. I'm an amateur boater; I love to go out and be near the water. That's where my soul kind of finds peace, that's where I can unplug.

Tubi cashes in on the value of free to surpass other streamers

As subscription prices for Netflix, Disney+, Max and Peacock creep up, consumers are turning to the ad-supported service.

Story by
Stephen
Battaglio

IN THE ERA OF “STREAM-FLATION,” it’s a good time to be Tubi.

Subscription prices for Netflix, Disney+, Max and Peacock have crept up over the last year, and more consumers are turning to the free, ad-supported video-on-demand service owned by Fox Corp.

Nielsen data showed that May was Tubi’s most-watched month ever, with an average audience of 1 million viewers, up 46% from a year ago.

The streamer edged out Disney+, which averaged 969,000 viewers. Tubi also easily beat NBCUniversal’s Peacock, Warner Bros. Discovery’s Max and Paramount Global’s Paramount+ while also topping free competitors such as the Roku Channel and Pluto TV. YouTube is the only free ad-supported streaming platform with more viewers than Tubi.

Third-quarter revenue for Tubi grew 22% year-over-year at a time when the advertising market was sluggish, according to Fox.

“Tubi continues to pull ahead from its (ad-supported video on demand) competition and post faster than expected growth,” analysts at research firm Moffett Nathanson said in a report for clients.

The escalating subscription costs of the competition have certainly helped.

With Netflix, Amazon and others now selling advertising in addition to charging fees, Tubi is looking like a better deal to many budget-conscious consumers.

“Of course, those are things that are going to positively impact us,” Adam Lewinson, chief content officer for Tubi, said in a recent interview.

The San Francisco-based company was founded in 2017 and acquired by Fox in 2020 for \$440 million. Tubi currently offers 250,000 TV episodes and movies.

Tubi says 63% of its users describe themselves as cord-cutters or “cord-nevers” — people who have never subscribed to a pay-TV package. About half are what Tubi categorizes as multicultural, covering Black, Latino, Asian and LGBTQ+ audiences.

Although Tubi has a wide array of livestreaming channels that deliver shows, live sports and news in real time, 90% of its viewing is on demand, younger viewers’ preferred way to watch. The streamer says the median age of its audience is 39, the youngest in television.

Tubi has built a mass-appeal product by covering a wide swath of genres, including horror and sci-fi. It has become a destination for work by Black filmmakers. The company is the platform for Village Roadshow’s Black Noir Cinema initiative, aimed

at creating Blaxploitation-style films (the first one, “Cinnamon,” starred Pam Grier, an iconic actor from the genre’s original era).

Tubi has an array of vintage hit network TV series that are discovered and then devoured by younger viewers not already familiar with them. But it also provides a home for shows that were ignored when they initially ran on traditional TV, even highlighting them in a section called “Canceled Too Soon.”

One such obscuri-

ty, “Believe,” was gone after 13 episodes on NBC in the 2013-14 TV season. But the series from “Gravity” director Alfonso Cuarón, about a girl with supernatural abilities, is now a Tubi hit.

“If things stay on its current course, we believe it’s going to get far more viewers on Tubi than it ever got in its first window on broadcast,” Lewinson said of “Believe.”

The next step for Tubi is to expand its production of original programs and movies, which remain an important draw for consumers when they choose a streaming service. Starting with low-budget 2021 thriller “Twisted House Sitter,” the company has produced 200 titles, mostly genre movies, documentaries and animated series.

But with success comes the ability to attract higher-profile talent. Filming has begun on original Tubi film “The Thicket,” a dark western starring Peter Dinklage and Juliette Lewis.

Lewinson acknowledges that some explaining was required to get Dinklage to sign on with his project when they first met two years ago.

“I had to get him comfortable with what we are building,” Lewinson said.

As Tubi has expanded its presence in the TV landscape, it’s no longer a heavy lift for Lewinson to get big names into the fold. This fall, the service is launching its first original series, “The Z Suite,” with Lauren Graham, a multigenerational TV star thanks to her “Gilmore Girls” fame.

“The Z Suite” features Graham as a fired advertising mogul whose agency is taken over by its Gen Z employees. Tubi developed the series after the marketing department noted an abundance of TikTok videos about generational divides in the workplace.

Besides inspiration for programs, social media has given Tubi a lift through genre fans who post about the streamer’s content.

“There is a gentleman on Reddit who actually has a spreadsheet with synopses of all of our horror movies,” said Nicole Parlapiano, Tubi’s chief marketing officer. “We are really good at tapping into fandom communities, whether it be on Reddit or TikTok.”



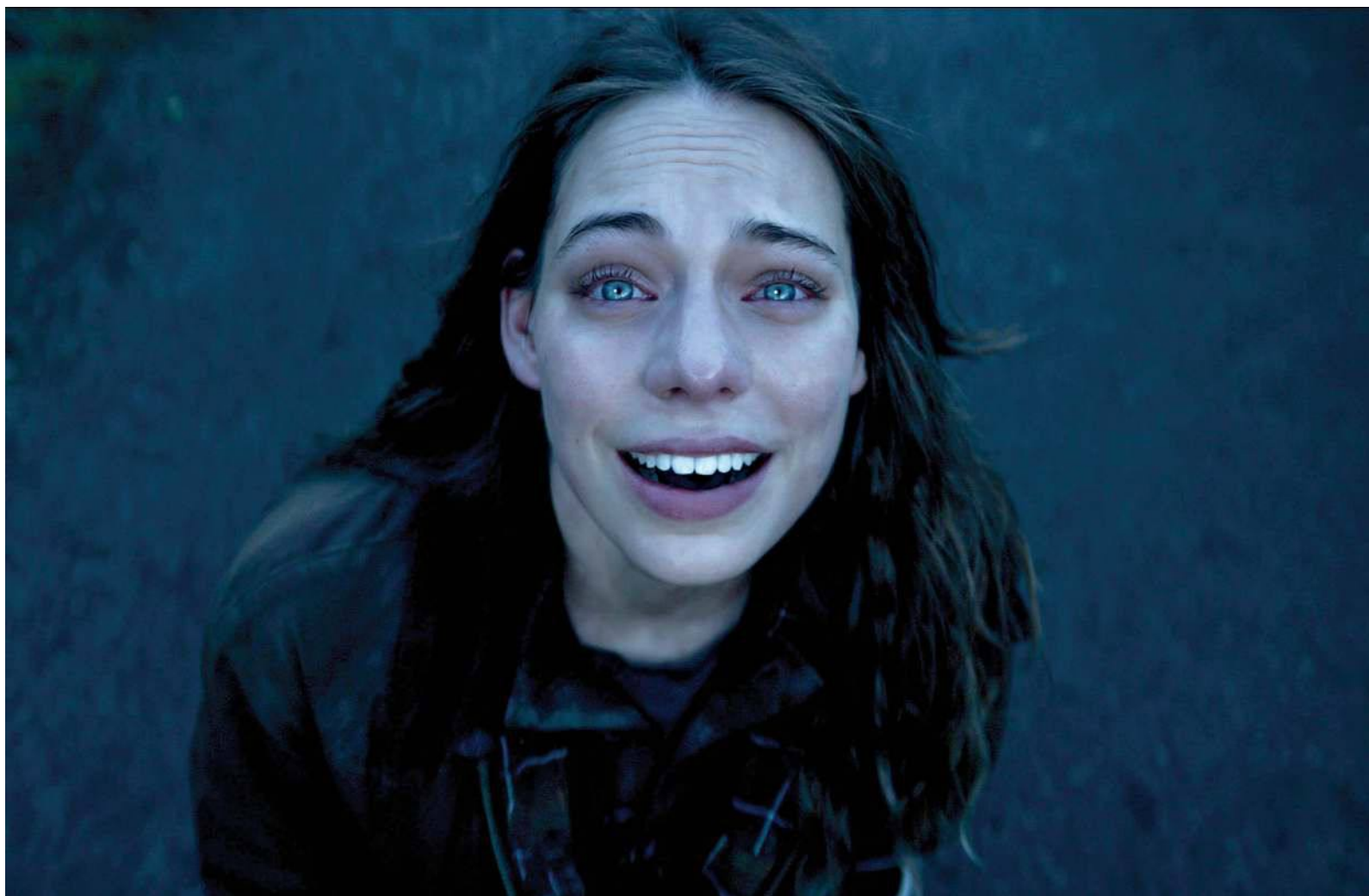
↓ Damon
Wayans in
“Cinnamon,”
on Tubi.

ZACH POPIK/FOX

One Shot

“We were going for something grounded and naturalistic. At the same time, we wanted to use the light and camera to tell a compelling story visually,” says cinematographer Martin Ahlgren about “3 Body Problem,” an absorbing Netflix series from D.B. Weiss, David Benioff and Alexander Woo that explores an alien invasion through a scientific lens. A stirring example of the immersive visual language is seen in Episode 5, “Judgment Day,” where the distant beings reveal their presence on Earth with a colossal eye in the sky. For some, it’s nightmare fuel, but for others, like Tatiana (Marlo Kelly), who’s been a loyal ally to the aliens, it’s a blessing. To create the surreal sequence, shots of character reactions were intercut with visual effects of a world flipping upside down on itself, all culminating in a shot of a woman seen from behind, limping with crutches. The camera then flips, revealing an emotionally charged Tatiana before slowly pushing down on her from the sky. Ahlgren used a telescopic crane to bring the overhead perspective into focus. “Part of it is sort of how the terror builds and builds, and then it lands on her and it’s not terror. For her it’s salvation,” he says. The aliens’ message is clear: You are bugs.

Story by
Daron James



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■ NEWSLETTER



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