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LA. WEEKLY (ISSN #0192-1940 & USPS 461-370) is published weekly by LA Weekly LP, 724 S. Spring St., Los Angeles, CA 90015. Periodicals postage paid at Los Angeles, CA. LA Weekly is available free of charge in Los Angeles County, limited to one copy per reader. Additional copies of the current issue of LA Weekly may be purchased for \$1, payable in advance at the LA Weekly office. Outside Los Angeles County, the single-copy cost of LA Weekly is \$1. LA Weekly may be distributed only by LA Weekly's authorized independent contractors or LA Weekly's authorized distributors. No person may, without prior written permission of LA Weekly, take more than one copy of each LA Weekly issue. For back-issue information call 310-574-7100. The entire contents of LA Weekly are Copyright 2014 by LA Weekly LP. No portion may be reproduced in whole or in part by any means, including electronic retrieval systems, without the express written permission of the publisher, LA Weekly, 724 S. Spring St., Los Angeles, CA 90015.

# CALENDAR GOEDITORS' DICKS



#### **THURSDAY, JULY 21**

**Sofia Crespo: Brief Histories of Simulated Lifeforms at Vellum LA.** When most people think of artificial intelligence, they imagine inorganic hardware and machines. Sofia Crespo has established herself as a pathbreaking artist working with AI through an alternative approach: asking how algorithms might let us explore biology, nature, and evolution with fresh eyes. 7673 Melrose Ave., West Hollywood; Opening reception: Thursday, July 21, 7-9pm; On view through August 7; free; vellumla.com.

#### FRIDAY, JULY 22

Fossilized and Realized: Tar Pits Video Festival at La Brea Tar Pits Museum. A selection of videos submitted by the public, a screening of a new film about La Brea Tar Pits by moderator and host Nic Cha Kim, and a discussion on the Tar Pits' significance in art and popular culture with the Natural History Museum's Archivist Yolanda Bustos and artist in residence Mark Dion, whose work examines how dominant ideologies and public institutions shape our understanding of history, knowledge, and the natural world. 5801 Wilshire Blvd., Miracle Mile; Friday, July 22, 8:30pm (food trucks and live music start at 5pm); free; tarpits.org.

## SATURDAY, JULY 23

Morteza Khakshoor: Stubbly Numbness at Five Car Garage. Khakshoor works with a range of subjects, but it's his attention to the male--in all his foibles, struggles, and pathos--that remains a salient feature of his output. As frequent protagonists in his paintings, like all of his subjects, they result from circuitous paths through found images and memories, seen and remembered, or invented from whole cloth. Opening reception: Saturday, July 23, Noon-4pm; Santa Monica address provided with rsvp; free; emmagrayhq.com.

**Iranian Mint at Advocartsy.** An inaugural launch event with the emerging NFT marketplace MetaMural, bridging the gap between physical fine art and blockchain

spaces. The group exhibition addresses themes of heritage, fairytale, identity, and memory within a curation of works by artists of Iranian origin — Pouya Afshar, Kourosh Beigpour, Ali Dadgar, Siavash Jaraiedi, Mobina Nouri, Hadi Salehi, Shadi Yousefian, Xâmuš, and NFT veteran Z-Hovak. 434 N. La Cienega, West Hollywood; Opening reception: Saturday, July 23, 7-10pm; On view through August 6; free; advocartsy.com.

#### Julius Eastman and Wild Up at the Broad

**Museum.** A live concert of *Femenine* by maverick composer Julius Eastman, copresented with and performed by acclaimed classical music ensemble Wild Up. Eastman challenged the exclusionary foundations of European classical music and organized his compositions as tools for social change. Much like the artists featured in The Broad's special exhibition, This is Not America's Flag, Eastman was also an activist who deployed his life experiences as a gay African American as the impetus to question what it means to be American and an artist. 221 S. Grand Ave., downtown; Friday, July 23, 8pm; \$20; thebroad.org.

## SUNDAY, JULY 24

Susan Feldman: *Moving Through Matter* at Matter Studio Gallery. Feldman is a mixed media artist, working with scrap wood, found objects, plexiglass, paint, photographs, and various other upcycled materials to create works that are both sculptural and architectural, referencing landscapes, passageways, and reflections. As viewers move through the spaces of her installations, Feldman's work engages and transforms our own physical boundaries while referencing fragments of experiences. 5080 W. Pico Blvd., Mid-city; Opening reception: Saturday, July 24, 4-7pm; On view through August 21; free; matterstudiogallery.com.

#### WEDNESDAY, JULY 27

Sean Higgins at L.A. Louver. L.A. Louver's newest Rogue Wave Project presents new photography and sculpture by the Los Angelesbased artist Sean Higgins. In his new series of photographic works, Higgins seams together multiple views of real landscapes to create imaginary terrains. A form of digital cubism, in each of his compressed images, Higgins conjures the experience of moving through and existing within the landscape. 45 N. Venice Blvd., Venice; Opening reception: Wednesday, July 27, 6-8pm; On view through September 2; free; lalouver.com.



#### JULY 22-28 45 Grave Whisky A Go Go

Dinah Cancer's deathrock/horror punk pioneers are still soldiering on, and they're still great live. Band members may have come and gone, but they have an iconic singer and a ton of great tunes. Ravens Moreland, the Rhythm Coffin, the Bourbon Saints and Underground City open. 7 p.m. on Friday, July 22 at the Whisky A Go Go, \$20, whiskyagogo. com.

#### *Mike Watt & the Missingmen* Alex's Bar

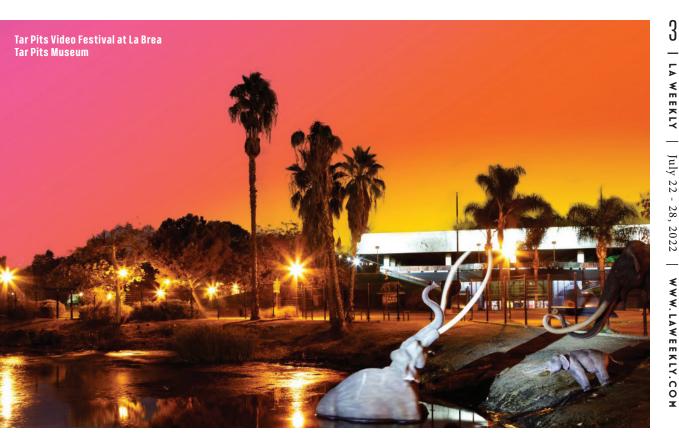
SoCal punk mainstay Mike Watt is best known for his work with the Minutemen and fIREHOSE, and later on with the reformed Stooges. He's also a member of Flipper nowadays, but still finds time for his own projects such as the Missingmen. Hoop Jail, Spoon Benders, and Human Musik also play. 2 p.m. on Sunday, July 24 at Alex's Bar, \$12.88, alexsbar.com.

#### The Chicks Greek Theatre

We've never needed the Chicks, formerly the Dixie Chicks, more than we do now. Once canceled for speaking their collective mind about former president W. Bush, they've risen like phoenixes, and are better than ever. Jenny Lewis opens. 7:30 p.m. on Monday, July 25 and Tuesday, July 26 at the Greek Theatre, \$49.50-\$169.50, lareektheatre.com.

#### *Joey Bada\$\$* The Observatory

Brooklyn rapper Joey Bada\$\$ is about to drop his third album 2000, having already released The Light Pack EP this year. This OC show will be a great opportunity to hear those new tracks in a live environment. 7 p.m. on Wednesday, July 27 at the Observatory, \$80+, observatoryoc.com





THE PODCAST ISSUE

# THE REALITY OF FICTION IN A PODCAST WORLD

Narrative-Driven Podcasts are Experiencing A boom

BY BRETT CALLWOOD

erhaps it was inevitable. Radio is a century old and it wasn't long into its life as a medium for public entertainment that it began to offer scripted shows – radio plays and soap operas with names like *Painted Dreams* and *Captain Midnight*. Titles that would pass into pop culture folklore would follow – the *Lone Ranger, Buck Rogers*, the *Green Hornet*.

Therefore, it stands to reason that when the popularity of podcasts began to boom, initially with the news and discussion-based format, narrative-driven shows would soon follow. And follow they have!

The growth in the popularity of scripted, narrative-driven podcasts has been swift and thrilling. Yes, radio did it first and decades ago. But this is a new world, utterly screen-obsessed. The fact that fans of fiction have been so eager to put their reliance on visuals to one side and allow a story to wash over them is impressive and reassuring.

The big guns caught on fast, too. Ini-

tially, these stories may have been independent ventures. But now, the likes of Marvel, Warner Bros and AMC have realized the potential for storytelling on budgets that, no matter how good the format gets, are going to be lower than TV and movies.

Jenny Turner Hall first became known for writing an independently produced podcast called *Mars Patel*, a children's adventure series that won a Peabody Award. The success of that show brought her to the attention of Marvel, and now she writes and directs the *Marvel's Wastelanders: Wolverine* podcast.

"When someone calls you up and says 'Hey, would you like to do a story for Marvel involving Wolverine?', there was no frigging way I was going to say no to that," Turner Hall told us via Zoom. "I ended up writing and directing the series. It's very similar to writing for scripted television. That's the vibe and how much work goes into these scripts. It's really meant to be a full entertainment experience. What's cool is, it's a new art form that people are discovering, and really liking, but it's been around for a long time, but it's really been reimagined for the modern age with really amazing advances that we have made in sound design. It's fun. It really engages your imagination, and really requires a different set of listening skills, to TV shows. A lot of people like it better because of that. It engages more of your brain. But also, you can listen to a podcast while you're cleaning out your garage."

Turner Hall was in on the ground floor, with very few scripted podcasts available to the public at that time. *Welcome to Night Vale*, which took the form of community updates for a fictional desert town, was one of the first. *Mars Patel* came soon afterward.

"Podcasts weren't even that big when we started *Mars Patel*," Turner Hall says. "It was mostly chat – either investigative journalism podcasts, Mark Marron and the chat podcasts, and then you had *Welcome to Night Vale*, which was completely different and they totally took on this format and added even a component of being live sometimes. It was something fresh and different in the space, and they were having a really good time, too. That broke new ground."

Originally brought in by Marvel as a director, Turner Hall soon found herself writing the Wolverine series, too. The rest is history.

"I got everyone's blessing to go in my own directions with the series, which I did in conjunction with Marvel," she says. "With audio, I feel like they give you a little more leeway and breathing room. It's the *Wastelander* series and we're 30 years in the future, so that gives you some creativity and new fertile soil."

**Ryan North started a web comic** called Dinosaur Comics in 2003, and the success of that and various other ventures encouraged Marvel to come calling. Having co-created a comic book series starring comedic character Squirrel Girl, the comic giants roped him in for the podcast series.

"I had received an email from one of our producers, and they had come up with the idea of doing a Squirrel Girl scripted podcast series," North says. "She contacted me and said, 'Hypothetically if we were doing this, would you want to be involved?' I said 'Yes, but it sounds like a ton of work.' At first I agreed just to plot it out. 'Here's what will happen, but dialogue will be someone else's.' But I plotted it out and realized that I love writing dialogue and hate plotting. I'd already done all the hard work, now I wanted to do the fun part and do the dialogue. I asked if it wasn't too late, and they said that they were hoping I'd say that."



North says that there are similarities between these podcasts and the old radio shows, but there are differences, too.

"The tastes are obviously more modern," he says. "I listen to a lot of 1940s sci-fi shows, so there are a lot of very short stories with twist endings and science that does not really make sense. It's just fun to hear. The cultural origins of superhero comics aren't that far divorced from early sci-fi. The thing that we were doing in the Squirrel Girl podcast that helped make it unique was that everything you heard in the show was diegetic. It was as if you were inside the Marvel Universe - you turn on your radio and this is what you were hearing. It gave us this opportunity to have it be natural, have it have errors. It's not like you're listening to a radio show, but you're listening to your friends on the radio. That distinction makes a difference."

North has taken Squirrel Girl on a journey many Marvel fans couldn't have foreseen, partly thanks to the popularity of narrative podcasts. When he started, he really couldn't see them generating the sort of success that they're seeing.

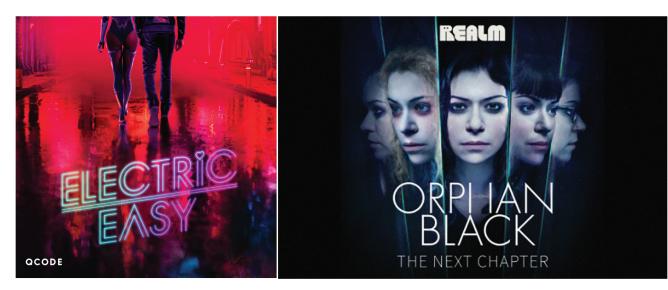
"It's hard to get that 1,000-mile view when you're on the ground in the middle of it," he says. "At the beginning of this, I would have been equally unsurprised if this was the only thing doing this sort of thing. I'm glad that it is. I feel like there's so much fun in this format. Things go away and come back. But this idea of episodic scripted narrative podcast is something that there's so much more you can do with it. Comics is such a young medium, and podcasts feel the same way. Yes we've had radio for over 100 years, but there's still stuff that can be done with podcasts that we haven't done yet. That's the core of what makes it so exciting for me."

**Molly Barton is the cofounder**, with Julian Yap, of *Realm*, a popular and independent podcast streaming network.

"I was coming out of the book publishing industry," Barton says. "I was global digital director at Penguin Random House. So I've been involved in audio storytelling for a long time, but in the audio book space. I was obsessed with serialized storytelling. I just felt like books feel like a big commitment because they're one chunk. Looking at television and the rise of podcasts, I was like, it's such a beautiful experience where the listener has the agency of like, 'I'm just going to try an episode and if I like it, I keep going.' That was what led me to it. Julian was thinking along similar lines, so we got together and formed the company."

Due to the screen-heavy nature of today's society, Barton believes that Realm shows, such as sci-fi drama *The Vela* and the body horror of *Spider King*, feel more intimate than the old radio shows may have done.

"I think at that time it felt connected and social, whereas at this point, we get a lot of listener comments saying, 'I listen to Realm stories as part of my personal



time, my wind down time, when I'm done with my work and I want to switch gears, switch on the visual imagination," she says. "So I just think the sensibility of the experience is different given the context. But I would say that's one of the reasons it's exciting to be working at Realm. We're the largest independent fiction podcast network, and there just aren't a lot of people in the world who know how to make scripted audio. Most of the people who came into podcasting came through from radio or journalistic backgrounds. So it's a specialized skill that is different from writing for the screen or writing a book. Sound is a character, essentially."

Unlike North, Barton says that she did see a potential for a podcast boom way back at the beginning.

"If you compare film, television, book publishing, so many other media forms thrive on scripted content," she says. "It's evergreen, and the level of interest over time can grow. But as I was referring to earlier, there just haven't been as many people in the industry who understand how to make this content. My real hunch has been, and it's proving to be true, that this category would grow tremendously once listeners knew that it was available."

That's exactly what ended up happening. The show *If I Go Missing, the Witches Did it* earned Realm its first Webby Award. Meanwhile, shows such as *Outliers* (starring Rory Culkin) and the comedy *The Co-Founder* are seeing their audience grow and grow. The latter is particularly relevant right now.

"Whenever I describe that show to people, they're immediately charmed and intrigued," says Barton. "This idea that two women are trying to save their company from being taken over by a white guy is just funny in and of itself. That was the social currency of the topic, which combined with having a female comedic-driven show, was exciting."

In addition, Realm picked up the show Orphan Black after the TV show was canceled. The fact that canceled fan favorite shows might be able to see new life in podcast form is thrilling. We ask Barton if there's anything else coming from Realm that we should look out for, and she gives us a very L.A. answer.

"I think the other show that we're super excited about coming down the pipe is called *Echo Park*," she says. "It's a near future thriller set in L.A., starring Harry Shum Jr., so that is coming in August."

Stream Marvel Wastelanders; Wolverine and Squirrel Girl: The Unbeatable Radio Show using the SXM app, Pandora, Apple Podcasts, Stitcher, Pocket Casts, and Spotify. Stream all of the Realm shows at Realm.fm.

### THE PODCAST ISSUE / ENTERTAINMENT

# A PODCAST TO Remember

Former *LA Weekly* Film Critic Dives into Hollywood's Provocative Past

BY LINA LECARO



arina Longworth is the best kind of film academic. Her perspective on cinema and its history is expansive and ruminative, but her passion for the subject matter ensures whatever she delves into never comes off dry or too heady. She entertains as she educates, which is what every writer hopes to do with their work. Which is why her podcast You Must Remember This has held steady as a top film-themed listen since 2014.

The show recently won the 2021 iHeart-Radio Podcast Award for TV & Film. Applying the meticulous research and detailed perspective that she's brought as the author of books about George Lucas, Al Pacino, Meryl Streep and her latest Seduction: Sex, Lies and Stardom in Howard Hughes's Hollywood (Custom House, 2018), the podcast tackles different themes each season. Past shows delved into everything from the mythology of the Rat Pack to the controversy behind Disney's Song of the South, to "Dead Blondes" exploring the lives and early deaths of Hollywood's best known screen bombshells.

This past season, she explored the significance of sex in Hollywood films during the last two decades of the 20th century, providing an important feminist context as she unraveled the evolution of X-rated movies (with focus on Deep Throat and Last Tango in Paris), sultry dramas and raunchy comedies that also became mainstream hits - from 10 to American Gigolo to Porky's. Beyond the titillating subject matter, "Erotic 80s" & "Erotic 90s" is a highly engaging presentation about Hollywood history, but it's more than that. Its storyteller elements suck you in. Pulling from her formidable journalistic background - Longworth co-founded seminal film blog Cinematical and was LA Weekly's film editor and lead critic from 2010-2012 – it's a podcast that lives up to its name. We talked about it for the Podcast Issue.

Many people know your work as a film critic for LA Weekly, and your work blogging and critiquing film. But how did that evolve into the podcast?

Well, I left LA Weekly in January 2013 because I was just burnt out writing about new movies. I studied the history of Hollywood in graduate school. I was always most excited at the Weekly when I got a chance to write about retrospectives, or to interview a director who had a long filmography, where I could do research and really dig into the past with them. But that wasn't really my beat - my assigned beat was to review all the new movies that came out. And I just lost interest in that. I wanted to try to get back to this thing that I was really interested in. So between January 2013 and April 2014, I launched the podcast.

The Podcast world has really exploded in the past few years. You were sort of on the forefront, especially for film content.

Yeah, I mean, I'd done podcasting before that, because I used to work for this company that no longer exists called Spouts, which was a social network for film fans. They had a podcast that was nominated for a Webby, which I was on. That was like 2008-2009. But obviously, there was kind of a new podcast boom, happening about seven or eight years later, when mainstream podcast hits drew more people's attention to the idea that they were kind of a normal thing, and not just a nerdy internet thing.

What was your vision when you first started and how has it evolved?

When I was an undergraduate in art school, I was making these videos that were sort of personal diaries about the things I was watching. I would write these scripts for my own narration, and then the imagery would be a combination of stuff that I would shoot. But it was a lot of stolen footage from movies and TV shows, and obviously using that was not a legally feasible way of doing it, and this was before YouTube. So I ended up focusing on the writing. I just kind of thought of it at first as being an audio-only version of these



videos I used to make. And I was sort of inspired by memories of driving around and in the '80s and '90s listening to late night radio. I really wanted it to be coming from a personal essay place. And then over time, I've kind of changed the format from season to season based on what the topic required.

It's a very journalistic approach. I think a lot of journalists think about doing podcasts, but the big question is how to do it. I like your approach and point of view. How did this season about sex come about?

During 2020, my husband [Longworth is married to Star Wars: The Last Jedi/ Knives Out writer/director Rian Johnson] and I were kind of revisiting a lot of movies from the '80s and '90s, that one of us or both of us had never seen before. And we sort of ended up watching a lot of movies like Jagged Edge and Black Widow, and these kinds of erotic thrillers that don't really exist anymore. So I was curious as to why they don't exist anymore, and what environment existed in Hollywood and what was the culture to make them thrive when they did. That was kind of the seed of it. It turned into doing a season with which is basically one episode per year of the '80s. And then I knew I was gonna do the '90s. That's what I'm researching now. But the vast majority of this podcast from previous seasons is about from the 1920s through the 1970s.

In regard to this particular season, it made me think about what we see on screen differently and understand just how sexist things were, as well as how messed up the business side was. Are things better in Hollywood from your point of view?

I think it's unfortunate that Hollywood is not making more movies about adult sexual relationships and, in fact, has seemed to shy away from that almost completely. When you see the reaction to a film like Fatal Attraction in 1987, you see that it was able to create an enormous discourse about how men and women relate to one another. And I feel like we're just leaving that discourse off the table.

So much work is involved in what you do. A lot of people think, oh, everyone has a podcast, so it's an easy thing to do. But it's not always. Can you kind of talk about that and creating this type of podcast?

Yeah, the vast majority of podcasts are just a couple of people talking or it's an interview. What I do is months and months of research. I write these scripts and I do archival audio research to figure out what I can find to put into the show. And I figure out if there's anybody alive to interview, and so it's much more like writing a book than most podcasts. Even podcasts that sound like mine that have a similar research process, there's usually a full team of researchers. For me, it's just me. I have one freelancer who works a couple of hours a week. Even though my show has a lot of listeners, and it's been around for a long time, it's still kind of a DIY process.

Is there money to be made in the podcast space?

My podcast has always been a combination of ad supported and listener supported. So you can listen to my podcast for free and there's ads on it. If you want bonus content, then I have a Patreon, as well. At this point, I make a little bit more money from my share of the ad revenue than I make from Patreon. When I was leaving LA Weekly and trying to figure out what I was going to do, I realized there's not a lot of jobs out there for people who have master's degrees and study the history of Hollywood. So I had to create an opportunity for myself, and I've just been very fortunate that people want to listen to the show to the point where it can make a little bit of money, enough so that I can keep going. I'd rather do what I am interested in and make less money and have fewer listeners, but have the really passionate fan base that I have.

Film lovers are very dedicated, so it's a great niche. Do you listen to other podcasts yourself? And what do you think about the podcasting space right now in general?

Yeah, I listen to other podcasts. I mean, I generally listen to podcasts that are really different from mine. Podcasting is definitely a different environment from when I started mine. I think that there's an awful lot of competition and it must be very difficult to get your show heard. But I don't think it's bad. I think that what's interesting about podcasts - there is a relatively low barrier to entry. There's some podcasts I listen to that I don't think get more than a couple 1,000 listens. But I really, really love them. I've come to feel like the people who do them are sort of my friends, because I get so excited about listening to them every week. So I think there's room for that. There's room for the big stars in podcasting and there's room for everything in between.

# **'CASTED IN CALIFORNIA: A PODCAST LISTENERS LIST**



f you've been averse to podcasts, dismissing them as a trendy time-suck, you're not alone. But those who've given these audio explorations some time know they can be worth it, especially if you're stuck in your car or home for hours a day.

Podcasts should be looked upon like music - more is always merrier - even if there's lots of pood and not so good choices out there. Some are overrated and many never get their due, but the intention behind pretty much all of them is the same - to engage, inspire and celebrate topics that mean something... to someone. Finding that someone is what it's all about.

A brief history: the word "podcast" was reportedly coined by The Guardian in 2004, in an article about the blogosphere expanding into audio-driven content thanks to personal computers, smartphones and mp3's. The idea that digital audio files could be downloaded to a computer or mobile device or streamed to enjoy at any time opened up the possibilities of communication and entertainment, something that was already exploding thanks to social media. Software technology obviously played a role, too, and none other than original MTV VJ Adam Curry is credited with getting the streams flowing, cofounding the podcast network PodShow/Mevio in 2005 and as host of Daily Source Code, which covered early podcast culture. As the term became more commonplace, and more and more podcast networks started to emerge, the platform served as a way for celebrities to connect with fans, for writers to expand their storytelling reach, and for everyday folks to focus on niche or nerdier interests – from true crime to mental health.

Conceptualizing a podcast is one thing, but monetizing one is quite another. Mics up to anyone who does it purely for the expression and who, like a musician, simply wants to create something to share purposeful energy and ideas. From Serial and This American Life to Maron and Rogan, the biggest successes have led to copycats hoping to make a buck doing the same, especially in the narrative feature, entertainment and politics space. But there's so much more out there and some of the most intriguing stuff originates right here in California. Many aren't necessarily the most popular, but their followings are loyal and the efforts are worth it for all involved. Here's a list of some of our favorites. See LAWeekly.com's culture section for expanded info about each.

#### **Fictional Storytelling:**

Fear Initiative - fear initiative.libsvn.com/website/ category/1-beginnings

Drunken Devil's The Cosmic Game - thedrunkendevil.com/ episodes



The Edge of Sleep - gcodemedia.com/theedgeofsleep

#### Nonfiction Storytelling & True Crime:

Bone and Sickle - bone and sickle.com The Allusionist - theallusionist.orp Dragonfly: Brent Cantor Murder Mystery - redcircle.com/ shows/draponfly-brett-cantor-murder-mystery California True Crime - californiatruecrime.com

#### LA Life/History:

LA Meekly - lameeklypodcast.com Hear In LÁ - hearinla.com

- To Live and Die in LA livediela.com
- The Devil's Music podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-
- devils-music-with-pleasant-gehman/id1513014547 California Love - laist.com/podcasts/california-love Hidden History of Los Angeles - hiddenhistoryla.com

#### **Representation:**

Black Girl in OM - blackgirlinom.com/podcast

- Being Trans lemonadamedia.com/show/being
- The Laverne Cox Show podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/ the-laverne-cox-show/id1547504297

*Locatora Radio* - locatoraradio.com

MOM Podcasts - https://foreverdogpodcasts.com/mom/

#### Celebrity Hosted/Celebrity Gossip:

- Jonesy's Jukebox jonesysjukebox.com Smartless smartless.com
- Pretty Basic -podparadise.com/Podcast/1439655378
- This is Paris iheart.com/podcast/1119-this-is-par-
- is-76875461
- Conan O'Brien Needs a Friend teamcoco.com/podcasts/ conan-obrien-needs-a-friend
- Not Skinny But Not Fat notskinnybutnotfat.com

#### Out of the Box/Miscellaneous:

WOW Report 10 - https://www.worldofwonder.com/podcasts/

- Honest AF podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/honest-afshow/
- FishnetFlix https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/ fishnet-flix-a-costume-design-podcast

Bookworm - kcrw.com/culture/shows/bookworm/ The Monday Afternoon Movie - mondayafternoonmovie.com You Must Remember This -

youmustrememberthispodcast.com

# THE PODCAST ISSUE / MUSIC WHEN MUSICIANS MAKE PODCASTS...

...And Podcasters Make Music

#### BY BRETT CALLWOOD



rishikesh Hirway considers himself a musician first and foremost, who happens to also make podcasts. He's been creating music under the alias the One AM Radio for years – lush, occasionally experimental indie-pop with the catchiest, sweetest of melodies. But many know him better as the creator of the popular Song Exploder podcast, which sees him dive deep into one particular track with the artist that recorded it. Not to mention, he's also the creator and co-host of the West Wing Weekly, and he's responsible for the Home Cooking and Partners podcasts. The guy is busy.

"I definitely think Song Exploder is something I made only because and due to my career in music," Hirway says. "The other podcasts came out of there. But I think the way I make all of the shows I make are all related to the way my brain thinks about music."

The first episode of Song Exploder, about the Postal Service's "The District Sleeps Alone Tonight," debuted on New Year's Day 2014. The most recent episode at the time of going to press was the 235th, about Monica Martin's "Go Easy, Kid." In the years separating them, the show has explored songs by artists of all genres, from Metallica to Rick Astley and everything in between.

"Part of the reason I started the podcast is I really enjoyed the kind of conversations that I get to have on the show," Hirway says. "I did before I even made the show. Finding out why other artists make the choices they make. That's the core of the show, and I don't think I'll ever be tired of that. One of the most frustrating things is like, there's a lot more music than there is time."

It pays, Hirway says, not to be snobby when choosing the songs.

"One of the things that's interesting is getting to hear about a song that isn't something you would listen to on your own," he says. "What you might dismiss out of hand, that instinct happens naturally for everybody including me, but then when you stop and have a chance to hear about those thoughts and decisions, it reframes it for you. I like the idea that Song Exploder might give that moment to somebody."

Hirway says that his parallel career as a musician entirely informs his approach to creating *Song Exploder*.

"The way it helps the most is being able to talk to musicians in a way that they know they can talk about music the way that they normally would," he says. "They don't have to do some kind of code switching for a lay audience. That's up to me later in the editing process."

That brings us to Hirway's own music; he released the Rooms I Used to Call My Own EP this year – his first music under his own name.

"One AM Radio was my musical identity for over a decade," he says. "For this record, I tried writing with other people for the first time, which is something that I really only learned about by making Song Exploder. It was really cool. I wrote half the songs with Jenny Owen Youngs [L.A. Exes], and half with John Mark Nelson. On the production side, I worked with some old friends, like Jimmy Tamborello, who was the first ever guest on Song Exploder. He was in the Postal Service. Yo-Yo Ma plays cello on one of the songs."

**Bonnie Bloomgarden fronts L.A. rockers** the Death Valley Girls, and she started the Death Valley Girls Podcast so that she could chat about the things she loves to chat about, namely the supernatural and music, with all manner of interesting characters. Full disclosure – this writer has been a guest on the show.

"Over the past seven years, we have been collecting supernatural interviews on tour from all around the world," Bloomgarden says. "We love gathering stories and trying to figure out the mysteries of the universe. Our first interview was in Gothenburg, Sweden. We met a former skeptic that found himself outnumbered by ghosts of pirates in the city center in the middle of the night! Later that week a missing 500-year-old pirate sword fell from a tree, and was a pretty big news story. He also became a believer! We weren't exactly sure what format we would release these interviews, but we made it a goal to gather as many tales of the strange and unusual as possible. Officially, however, we started the podcast March 2021, once we figured out how to use Zoom."

The main aim of the show, Bloomgarden says, is that everyone feels believed.

"I think the main thing that has changed is that I'm not interviewing people to prove the paranormal or su-



pernatural to anybody anymore; I am certain that it is real," she says. "I am certain ETs and UFOs exist! I'm more interested now in talking to people about their personal experience. What it's like to live with these extra senses, and have these extra experiences. I don't want people to feel alone or alienated."

The subjects covered on the show have been varied and fascinating, from the inventor of the world's largest gummy bear to psychics, sex witches, mediums, hospital workers, animal reiki masters, film makers, a weed farmer, and more.

"I feel like almost everyone is a hero, if you just give them time to explain what they are excited about," Bloomgarden says. "I like to talk to people about what excites them, why they do what they do, and how they overcame obstacles to be the heroes they are."

The artist says that she can't believe how many people are listening to the show now, but she has tricks to stand out.

"I think I just try to find exciting guests that talk honestly and openly about what they are passionate about," she says. "Also people that have not been taken seriously or beloved. I think people love hearing about other people's stories and growth and successes, it reminds them it's OK to try!"

There's plenty more to come from the Death Valley Girls Podcast, and also from Hirway who has expansion in mind for Song Exploder.

"Song Exploder is branching out this summer," he says. "On July 20, the first episode of Canción Exploder is coming out — the Spanish language spinoff. In August, on the Song Exploder feed, there's gonna be a miniseries called Book Exploder that I've made with author Susan Orlean."

Stream Song Exploder and the Death Valley Girls Podcast at all of the usual streaming platforms.

# **COUNTY SUPERVISORS SEEK APPROVAL TO REMOVE SHERIFFS WHO 'ABUSE POWER'**

The Los Angeles County Supervisors Seek the Power to Remove A Sheriff, Saying Checks and Balances Are Needed for the County's Highest Law Enforcement Position

BY ISAI ROCHA

#### THE PODCASTS ISSUE

# IN THE MIDST OF STEADY ENTERTAINMENT COMING FROM THE PODCASTING WORLD, THERE ARE NEWS-BASED PODCASTS WITH JUST AS MUCH VALUE FOR YOUR EARS

he podcast scene continues to grow year after year, with streaming platforms and audio apps showing further commitment to the digital format, making it a perfect way to not only lose yourself in entertainment and fantasy, but informational topics, as well.

Perhaps the strongest example of the podcast evolution came from Spotify's \$200 million commitment to Joe Rogan and his podcast, in a move that draws parallels to Howard Stern's lucrative contract with XM Radio, causing him to leave traditional radio and focus on subscription-based streaming.

Podcasts have become essential, and to those who prefer digesting information in audio form, there is no better way to do so than with a podcast.

From documentary-style investigations, to daily updates on current events, here is a list of five essential news podcasts that should be making it onto your daily rotation.

#### RADIOLAB

A classic NPR radio show that traces back to 2002, Radiolab has found its way to the podcasting world, providing documentary-style audio adventures for a new generation of listeners. In the familiar public radio format of narrating a story through audio interviews, the weekly episodes with hosts researcher Latif Nasser and NPR reporter Lulu Miller explore not just topical news, but historical events and science-based features, as well. While the length of episodes vary, they typically hover around one hour in time, with the radio versions heard on more than 450 NPR affiliates across the U.S. While its core episodes are free for all, hardcore listeners have the option to subsribe for behind-the-scenes and an ad-free experience through its membership program called "The Lab."

#### **POD SAVE AMERICA**

The aptly punny Pod Save America show is hosted by four former aides of 44th President Barack Obama and describes itself as a "no-bullshit conversation about politics." he Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors may soon ask Angelenos to vote on an amendment to grant them authority to remove a sheriff whom they feel "abuses power" or "violates the law."

The proposal, co-authored by Supervisors Holly J. Mitchell and Hilda L. Solis, passed in a 4-1 vote; the County Counsel now is tasked with drafting an order that could eventually be seen on L.A. County ballots come November.

"Accountability over law enforcement is public safety," Supervisor Solis said in a statement. "Ensuring our residents have the ability to vote on being free from law enforcement intimidation, harassment and misconduct, and holding them accountable for any ensuing harm and trauma is the Board of Supervisors' responsibility, specifically over the Sheriff of Los Angeles County. This charter amendment would provide residents with the oversight they expect and the peace from law enforcement abuse they deserve." L.A. County Sheriff Alex Villanueva responded to the amendment, calling the supervisors "tone deaf," and saying a conflict exists, as part of his responsibilities extend to policing possible crimes enacted by elected officials, such as the supervisors.

"My job is to investigate crime. That includes crime committed by public officials and elected officials," Villanueva said during a livestreamed Q & A session. "That's why the office of the sheriff is independent. In the exact same nature that the district attorney... has the authority, according to the constitution, to prosecute crime. The D.A. office also has to be independent of the board of supervisors. Once they gain the control of either, they've gained the control to basically dictate who gets investigated and who does not get investigated."

The supervisors said they believe the motion would not interfere with the sheriff's investigative process and would "establish meaningful checks and balances," according to the motion's text.

The four hosts are Jon Lovett and Jonathan Favreau, who were Obama speech writers; Dan Pfieffer, who was Obama's senior advisor; and Tommy Vietor, who was a spokesperson for the former president. The hosts' conversational and sometimes snarky tones never feel overwhelming, which helps with the absorption of such heavy topics discussed on any given day. The news perspectives are unique in Pod Save America, as it's not often that a group of people who worked directly with a U.S. president get together and speak on critical subject matter to the masses. On top of that, their communication experience is tailor-made to effectively speak to the country in a way that's easy to understand.

#### **THIS AMERICAN LIFE**

One of the most popular news radio show-turned-podcast that you may already be familiar with, is This American Life by Chicago Public Media. With more than 2 million downloads per episode, This American Life is a weekly investigative news podcast hosted by one of the most familiar voices in news radio, Ira Glass. Glass, who has likely graced your ears at some point through either this podcast, or his work with NPR's All Things Considered and Talk of the Nation, leads the listener through stories with emotional interviews and narrative storytelling that engulfs you for an hour's worth of compelling knowledge. This American life is broadcast in more than 500 radio stations, but with digital media becoming ever more prevalent in daily life, the podcast version of the program is available through multiple apps, with its back catalog available for one to catch up on their favorite episodes.

#### NPR NEWS NOW

The trusty National Public Radio, better known as NPR, has several noteworthy podcasts in its lineup, but perhaps one of the most easily digestible is its NPR News Now. This audio news update isn't for the long drive ahead, but more of a quick way to catch up with the most crucial news for that morning. Typically five minutes in length, and updated hourly, you can trust to get the most up-to-date headlines at any time of the day. In addition to the typical podcast sources such as Spotify and Apple Podcasts, the NPR News Now podcast, as well as its others, can be found on the NPR One app, with all of the hourly episodes on-hand.

#### **MONOCLE 24: THE FOREIGN DESK**

For news that is centered around global affairs more than just American ones, Monocle 24's The Foreign Desk has you covered, from 40-minute deep dives into subjects such as Sri Lanka's economic crisis and U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson's resignation, to quick explainers on subjects such as Russia's gas supply and the origins of the terrorist Japanese Red Army, which will typically run below 10 minutes. The U.K.-based Monocle 24 is an entirely internet radio-run station. While its other segmented podcasts focus mostly on U.K. issues, The Foreign Desk, presented by Andrew Mueller is a one-stop-shop for a more global perspective on news.

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WEEKLY



#### TEND TO YOUR SOUL

October 7-9, 2022 Portals to the Imaginal: **Re-Visioning Depth Psychology** for the 21st Century

An immersive learning experience in honor of Pacifica's on campus re-opening

Times of personal as well as collective upheaval confront us not only with the archetypal tensions between chaos and rigidity, life and death, but also with the need for psychologies that can evolve to accommodate an emerging consciousness. We invite you to join the distinguished faculty and alumni of Pacifica Graduate Institute, along with invited artists, as we offer creative, forward-thinking scholarship that both builds on and transcends the boundaries of Jungian and post-Jungian theory. This conference additionally celebrates the formal, public re-opening of our campuses.

Join us, as we come together in creative community, to contribute to the hope that through engaging more deeply with one another - especially in these challenging times - something new will come.

Juliet Rohde-Brown, Ph.D. and

Mythic Meditation: Labyrinth

Emily Chow-Kambitsch, Ph.D.

Remembering How to be a

People: Exploring Psychological

Transcending the Classroom and

Re-Imagining the Sacred: Jung's

Daniel Siuba, M.A., Ph.D.c

Waking Reverie

Approach

Groups

Lionel Corbett

#### **Keynote Presentations** Portals to the Imaginal in a Digital Music as a Window to the

Era: Cultural Complexes and the Mythopoetic Imagination in the 21st Century Thomas Singer, M.D.

Mythic Imagination: Claiming Presence and the Body Poetic in the "After Times" Marissa Chibas

Reconsidering Individuation in the 21st Century: When Archetypal Patterns Shift Joe Cambray, Ph.D.

Tradition and Lineage: Mythopo ieticsn the Writing of Africanist Women Fanny Brewster, MFA, Ph.D.

The Imagination Matrix Stephen Aizenstat Ph.D.

Consulting Room: The Initiation and Invitation of Collective Trauma Jemma Elliot, M.A., LMFT, LPCC

Date and Time

Peter Dunlap, Ph.D.

Imaginal through Dreamtime and Process of Individuation: Exploring Lived Experience Pat Katsky, Ph.D. Imaginal Mediums: The Occult

**Featured Presentations** 

Origins of the Unconscious in Juna's Red Book David Odorisio, Ph.D.

Fastern Spiritual Practices and the

Co-Creative Responsibility for the Posthuman Age Glen Slater, Ph.D.

Depth Psychology is Transdisci-Belonging by Forming Conscious plinary: Introducing Jungian Arts-Based Research as a Methodology for Learning and Being in the 21st Century Susan Rowland, Ph.D.

> Art at the Abyss: Recreating Depth Psychology for a World on the Edge Mary Antonia Wood, Ph.D.

#### Location

Hosted at Pacifica Graduate 801 Ladera Lane Santa Barbara, CA 93108

October 7-9, 2022 Friday: 1:00 PM – 9:00 PM Saturday: 9:00 AM – 9:30 PM Sunday: 9:00 AM – Noon

Questions The Retreat at Pacifica 805.969.3626 retreat.pacifica.edu

#### retreat.pacifica.edu

Pacifica is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

Villanueva is up for reelection during November's state election, after receiving 30% of the vote during June's primaries, ahead of former Long Beach chief Robert Luna, who received 25% of the vote.

"The public demanded that the Board act on its duty to supervise the sheriff and protect people in the most vulnerable circumstances. The Board heard us, and it did," Melanie Ochoa, director of police practices at the ACLU of Southern California said in a statement. "No matter who wins in November, structural change is needed to make sure that we don't have another sheriff with a \$3 billion budget, unlimited weapons, and no real process to achieve accountability while lives are at stake."

The County Counsel now must present a drafted ordinance to call for a special election on Tuesday, Nov. 8.

The board also must conduct at least two readings of the draft, with the first coming on July 26. After the readings, the council will vote to pass the motion and put the amendment on the ballot.

#### STARBUCKS CLOSING MULTIPLE L.A. **STORES DUE TO WORKER SAFETY ISSUES**

Starbucks will be closing 16 stores on the west coast, six of which are in Los Angeles, citing 'challenging incidents' reported by employees.

In a letter to employees, Starbucks senior vice presidents of U.S. operations, Debbie Stroud and Denise Nelson, said they read through filed concerns from its employees, and recognized the challenges within U.S. communities have "played out" in its stores.

"We read every incident report you file it's a lot," the vice presidents said in a joint statement. "We want you to know that creating a safe, welcoming and kind third place is our top priority. Because simply put, we cannot serve as partners if we don't first feel safe at work."

In a leaked video posted by KVI Seattle's Ari Hoffman, Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz allegedly spoke at an internal meeting last week, alluding to more stores being closed if worker safety continued to be a concern due to crime, homelessness and mental health issues in communities.

"You all read the press release in the last couple of days, about the fact that we are beginning to close stores that are not unprofitable," Schultz said in the video. "It has shocked me that one of the primary concerns that our retail partners have is their own personal safety. We're listening to our people and closing stores, and this is just the beginning; there are going to be many more."

Pointing to its "third place policy," Starbucks will contemplate "modifying operations," closing restrooms or closing stores altogether if safety continues to be an issue.

The third place policy mentioned by the

vice presidents was introduced in 2020, touting its stores as a community that encourages "respect and dignity, free of bias and discrimination."

It adds that while in-store, guests and employees should use its spaces "as intended," communicate respectfully, be considerate of others and act responsibly.

Violating the terms of the "third place policy" could lead to removal from the store

Activist for the unhoused community in Los Angeles, Theo Henderson, has expressed concern over possible changes from Starbucks leading to discrimination against the homeless community.

Henderson posted a photo from a Los Angeles-area Starbucks, where a sign on the door informed guests that restrooms would be closed to the public.

"Starbucks is closing in areas where the unhoused community are," Henderson said in a tweet Wednesday. "They will prevent restroom usage. And the ability to charge devices."

Throughout the pandemic, Los Angeles Starbucks enforced bathroom closures, citing COVID-19 concerns in a time when dining areas were closed in the city. Since the pandemic, Henderson has accused not only businesses, but city officials who closed restrooms in public areas, of targeting homeless communities with the closures.

#### **DATES ANNOUNCED FOR 2028 SUMMER OLYMPICS IN L.A.**

Los Angeles is scheduled to host the 2028 Summer Olympics and we now know that it will officially begin on July 14 of that year.

Mayor Eric Garcetti announced the start date on Monday, adding that the Paralympic Games will start a month later, on Aug. 15.

"We really have enough facilities. We don't have to build new things," Garcetti said of the city's ability to host the Olympic events. "That's always been our competitive advantage and the pitch to the Olympics. We're not going to go into debt. We're not going to overspend. We are building these things for ourselves and the Olympics can use them, not vice versa."

With the help of newer stadiums such as SoFi Stadium in Inglewood and Banc of California Stadium in Exposition Park, Los Angeles County has played host to multiple prime time sporting events in the post-pandemic era.

In February, SoFi Stadium hosted the Super Bowl with the Los Angeles Rams winning the championship in its own home field. This Tuesday, Dodger Stadium played host to the MLB All-Star Game and all its surrounding festivities. In April 2023, SoFi will host Wrestlemania, professional wrestling's biggest event of the year. And as Garcetti alluded to, these major professional stadiums will be in line to host Olympic events come 2028.



### THE PODCAST ISSUE / FOOD

# **PHIL ROSENTHAL'S** NAKED LUNCH IS CONVERSAT

Comedy and Food Are On the Menu

#### **BY MICHELE STUEVEN**

orn out of a casual Thursday lunch tradition with friends like L.A. chef Roy Choi and Rolling Stone writer David Wild, Phil Rosenthal's Naked Lunch podcast is an eclectic mix of conversations about everything from music to munchies, over lunch.

In the weekly series, the awardwinning creator of Somebody Feed Phil and Everybody Loves Raymond, Rosenthal and Wild sit down with guests Choi, Sheryl Crow, Jimmy Jam, Allison Janney, Brad Paisley, Henry

Winkler, Michelle Yeoh and Ke Huy Quan.

A special treat for Everybody Loves Raymond fans, Rosenthal reunites with series stars Ray Romano and Brad Garrett over sandwiches from Larchmont Wine, for a little spicy conversation and a lot of laughs. They talk about Garrett's new dark comedy High Desert and Romano's film Somewhere In Queens, and reminisce over the Raymond premiere 25 years ago.

"I'm older than Peter Boyle was when he started playing my father," Romano

marriage over ice cream. Rosenthal has been married to Monica Horan for 32 years, who played the bubbly Amy MacDougall-Barone on Everybody Loves Raymond and pops up in the Maine episode of Somebody Feed Phil's new season, along with their kids.

Other fun episodes include discussions with power couple Susanna Hoffs of the Bangles and Jay Roach, and a lunch with Sheryl Crow at the legendary music haunt, the Sunset Marquis.

Somebody Feed Phil The Book, goes on sale Oct. 18 from S&S Simon Element and includes Rosenthal neverheard-before stories, screen captures and scripts, and behind-the-scenes photos from every episode of the first four seasons of the award-winning food and travel series. It also features more than 60 of viewers' most-requested recipes from acclaimed international chefs and local legends featured in the show, like Thomas Keller and Alice Waters.

"Wherever I travel, be it a different state, country, or continent, I always call Phil when I need to know where and what to eat." Romano says of the book. "He's the food guru of the world. I can't give you his phone number, but this book is just as good. It's probably better, because when he's on the phone, he never shuts up."



#### "Wildly entertaining. An absolutely terrific time." - THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

Conceived by ANTHONY VENEZIALE Directed by THOMAS KAIL

says on the show. "I weigh more than

on the show, and discuss love and

in.

Doris did on the pilot," Garrett chimes

Wild and Rosenthal bring their wives

Created by THOMAS KAIL, LIN-MANUEL MIRANDA, and ANTHONY VENEZIALE

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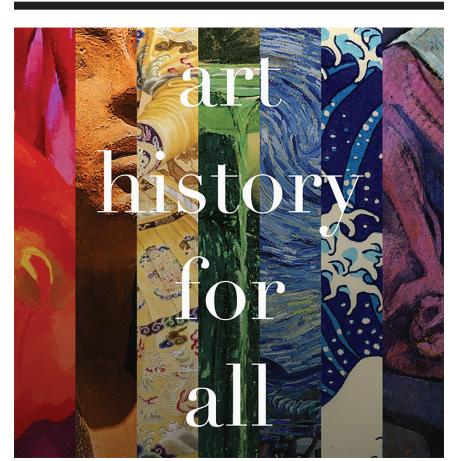


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# THE PODCAST ISSUE / ART **LOCAL AND LUMINARY: ARTS & LETTERS- MINDED PODCASTS** An Example of Chart Starter Withforward Destruction

An Easy and Free or Cheap Starter Kit for Art and Poetry Podding

BY SHANA NYS DAMBROT



he ever-expanding world of podcasts is unruly at best, and random refinements of search engines, the algorithm's suggestions, and "what should I listen to?" posts on Twitter don't always get your queue where you want it to be. With podcasts about art and literature, the situation is both better and worse. On the one hand, for discussions of visual art, one prefers, well, visuals — there's an old joke about "art on the radio" and podcasts face the same problem. This has engendered a variety of creative solutions such

as corresponding Instagram, etc. accounts where you can find images from the episodes. While art history does rather lend itself to the storytelling, unsolved mystery, salacious or redemptive biography, and even true crime formats, contemporary art programming benefits from visual bells and whistles. Poetry and spoken word on the other hand are ideally suited for the world of voice and sound, and some of the most intriguing poetry podcasts go beyond emotive readings and incorporate interviews and audio experiments.

If you're looking for a place to start your



liberal arts podcasting adventure, the following is a handful of selected art and poetry titles from the L.A.-local to the internationally topical, plus a spotlight on the Luminary platform that centers the arts and creative formats across its accessible subscription service of original and curated content with an emphasis on writers and artists.

#### Indie & Local

Not Real Art. Artists Sourdough, Man One, and Erin Yoshi curate the podcasting wing of the Not Real Art indie visual culture clearing house, which also produces events, symposiums, exhibitions, editorial, and public projects uplifting independent artists of Los Angeles across — especially those with an urban, street culture flair and fierce, unique visions. The podcast itself is interview-based, with an emphasis on personality, community, and unconventional pathways to success. notrealart.com/podcast.

What Artists Listen To. Artist Pia Pack created this podcast's deceptively simple premise as a way to explore and strengthen connectivity between artists — so often to be found alone in their studios — and their colleagues and audiences. More than traditional interview sessions, these episodes begin by unpacking the music the artists have playing in their studios and use that as a way into their life stories — and by extension, as a path to a more profound insight into the meaning and processes of their work. whatartistslistento.com.

**Rodeo Drive.** Now in its third season, the Rodeo Drive podcast unapologetically celebrates the sun-soaked glamor and influencer-forward expensiveness of the iconic Beverly Hills fashion and design character. But to its immense credit and the benefit of listeners, the program takes its representation of what this luxury can be seriously, regularly featuring visual artists, forwardthinking fashion and object designers, food and car aficionados, and other extraordinary creative voices for their takes on the evolution of the California dream. rodeodrive-bh. com/podcast.

**Poems on Air.** The Los Angeles Public Library hosts a classic, simple, inspirational weekly reading of poetry by L.A.'s Poet Laureate Lynne Thompson — her own and others' with an emphasis on the new and local — making for the perfect curated inspiration that always comes at the right time. lapl.org/books-emedia/ podcasts/poems-on-air.

#### Art World Deep Dive National & International

The Lonely Palette. Los Angeles institutions could do worse than take inspiration from Tamar Avishai's Boston Museum of Fine Arts podcast, which combines saucy art history with soothing tones and unexpectedly emotional man-on-the-street interviews with museumgoers — all with the purpose

# **ART ART ART**





of deep dives into single masterpieces from the collection. If you're here, you already care about art, but this is the kind of program that can make you remember why and how that care began. thelonelypalette.com.

Art History for All. Allyson Healy's background in the history of art and architecture, plus her experience in the field of publicfacing contemporary art gallery curation, inform her desire to offer conversational entry points into great moments of art history — with a special emphasis on art's timeless aspects that make lasting images and objects relevant to cultures hundreds or thousands of years and half a world away, today. arthistoryforall.com.

The Great Women Artists. Katy Hessel has an answer to art historian Linda Nochlin's cheeky provocation — Why have there been no great women artists? — with the



only possible response: a series of interviews

with women artists on their careers, plus

curators, writers, collectors and art lovers

speaking on the female artist who means the

most to them, from art history and today. in-

Luminary is an affordable and accessible

platform whose \$2.99/month subscription

offers access to its library of a few dozen

original series and a roster of curated/host-

ed programs - all with an emphasis on the

arts, including poetry and theater, as well

as perspectives on history, pop culture, and

Highlights of its lovingly crafted originals

menu include The Roxane Gay Agenda's

"bad feminist podcast of your dreams," and

Poetics — a behind-the-lyrics storytelling

juggernaut of marquee hip-hop writers

hosted by Omari Hardwick. Talib Kweli

has a huge presence on the site, with several series and one-off titles exploding at

the intersection of music, spoken word, and cultural urgencies. Kweli also is part of what

appears to be a new experiment for Lumi-

nary — the exclusive release of an album, as

he reunites with vasiin bey for a new Black

Star drop after 24 years, called, fittingly, No

The Poetry Foundation produces a series

of titles found on Luminary, from sweeping

literary trends to local scenes like spoken

word in Chicago. Poetry Off the Shelf,

Poem of the Day from Poetry Magazine,

and VS all are places where classic "read-

ing" experiences collide with poets going

deeper into the big ideas that inspire them,

within and outside their own work. Up

The Arts is a weekly podcast uplifting the

stagram.com/thegreatwomenartists.

Luminary

eccentric storytelling.

Fear of Time.

LGBTQ+ community in theater, music, art and literature.

In **The Art of Arting,** host Matt Mazany interviews and paints an expressive portrait of his guest while they talk about creating and appreciating visual art. **ART ART ART** is a weekly podcast hosted by Jonathan Wolfe and teen NFT phenom and rolling thunderball of pure joy Fewocious, talking about their experiences as young artists, detailing their creative process, interviewing artists they love, and more. It's a little random in the best possible way.

There's a lot on Luminary touching on geopolitics, world history, feminist thought, confessional comedy, and much more — but let's end with the title that first drew me to the platform: Metaphysical Milkshake. This weekly pod is hosted by scholar of world religions and creative/ entertainment writer Reza Aslan and his perhaps unlikely bestie, actor Rainn Wilson, and when they claim to tackle "Life's Big Questions," they aren't kidding. They talk about things like death, love, the supernatural, fear of intimacy, justice, the meaning of life, parenthood, art, comedy, self-destruction, war, certainty, faith, morality, wisdom, religion, gender, beauty, addiction, inspiration, being alone, being together, and being ourselves. Their guests range from topical experts (who often are quite hilarious) to their comedian friends (who often are shockingly deep and philosophical), and their repartee and willingness to "go deep and get weird" makes this strange project essential for an instructive but empathetic and superlatively entertaining engagement with reality. luminarypodcasts.com.

# THE PODCAST ISSUE / CANNABIS FIRST SMOKE OF THE DAY CELEBRATES A MONSTER FIRST YEAR

We Talked with the Hosts of One of the Fastest Growing Podcasts in Cannabis

BY JIMI DEVINE

a collaborative effort where it just keeps unfolding," Blackleaf told L.A. Weekly. "New stories, new people, all these different things that will hopefully go on for a while to be looked at and viewed."

The first two seasons were basically just friends. The familiarity with guests made it easy to come out of the gate. Then they started to reap the benefits of their efforts, as they worked their way outside their personal circles.

The pair are hesitant to pick a moment where they knew things started taking off. But they knew the moment it felt like it was getting a lot more real when Cookies cofounder Berner hit them up to do an interview.

"For me, that was a realization of like, okay, people are really watching," Blackleaf said. "Not only watching, they renew downtown L.A. studio, with the support of the sponsors.

They've received plenty of feedback from people who they consider the boots on the ground of the industry at cultivation sites and hash washrooms. Folks are hitting them up regularly to tell them where they hear the episodes playing in their work travels. One person traveling between two of their cultivation sites even noted he walked into them listening to different episodes while they worked at both facilities.

"And I just thought, that's epic that people care that much to listen to everyone else's story, that it's that impactful," Blackleaf said. "It literally hits home with the guys that are really doing this shit. The guys that are sitting there plucking leaves for eight hours a day. The guys running gardens, the guys washing hash."

And it's not just an L.A. thing. The trips, world travels have exposed them to cannabis communities all over America and Europe. Pack Gods asserted he always believed that from their first trip across the Atlantic a year ago at the heart of the pandemic, they were laying the groundwork for their international expansion with the proper intent. Especially given they were there to capture the tales of the continent's big hitters. When they returned to Barcelona for Spannabis 2022, they knew it was working, as enthusiasts from a variety of countries approached them to say they loved the show.

As much as they love globetrotting, the pair said it's hard to compare to 4/20 in New York this year. The window of cannabis hype in New York right now is absolutely wild with it more accessible across the city than ever, with little to no enforcement as New York's legal market comes to maturity.

But the pair have even more exciting personal developments on the horizon. They always had plans to do a fashion and cannabis line since touching foot in California. Later this year, it will become a reality in the recreational market.

"By the end of the year, we should have flower getting to the rec market," Pack Gods said. "So right now, we're building out the bloom rooms. We already have plants in the nursery. As soon as things are ready, we're going to move the genetics from the nursery into the bloom rooms.

They plan to go craft with the three small rooms in hopes of producing the best cannabis possible. After three years of LED testing, it went back to doubleended high-pressure sodium bulbs to make sure they can compete with the market's top dogs.

"It's all about a small focus," Pack Gods said.

Keep an eye out for a new episode of First Smoke of the Day, every week.



ew podcasts in any category have ever had a year one quite like *First Smoke of The Day*.

While there have been many pot podcasts over the years, none have ever been hosted by people with the industry experience of Pack Gods and Blackleaf. It showed over the first year. With much of the higher production quality cannabis podcast scene leaning towards the business and policy side, First Smoke of the Day proved to be precisely what the community was craving.

We sat down with the pair just after the release of their 50th episode. They jumped to on-camera interviews about halfway through when they interviewed Mario "Mr. Sherbinsky" Guzman. It only pushed the snowball down the hill faster.

The pair are understandably excited with how it's gone.

"It's just cool to be able to add value to

spect what we're doing, and they want to be involved. I think that was a big milestone for sure. And then as well as just having guys like Ivan from The Jungle Boys and everyone reach out and say they want to sponsor and then start giving us money."

While the money has never impacted the direction or content, it certainly has helped the cause. At that point, it was no longer a hobby. They're currently building out their

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FICTITIOUS BUSINESS STATEMENT 2022122906 The following person is doing business as COMPAR-TIR 200 S Soto St Los Angeles, CA 90033 LA COUNTY. REGISTERED OWNER(S): COMPARTIR CATERING LLC

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200 S Soto St Los Angeles. CA 90033. This business is conducted by an LLC. The date registrant started to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above: 01/2022 NOTICE- IN ACCORDANCE

WITH SUBDIVISION (A) OF SECTION 17920, A FICTI-TIOUS NAME STATEMENT EX-PIRES FIVE YEARS FROM THE DATE I WAS FILED IN THE OF-FICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK. EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBDIVISION (b) OF SECTION 17920 WHERE IT EXPIRES 40 DAYS AFTER ANY CHANGE IN THE FACTS SET FORTH IN THE STATEMENT PURSU-



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case. The name and address of the court is :: Los Angeles County Superior Court Stanley Mosk Courthouse 111 N. Hill Street Los Angeles, CA 90012 Case Number: 21STCV46110 The name, address and telephone number of plaintiff's attornev is: Phoebe P. Liu. Division of Labor Standards Enforcement, 320 W. 4th Street, #600, Los Angeles, CA 90013; Tel: 213-897-1511 Date of Filing of First Amended Complaint 4/19/2022 Sherri R. Carter Executive Officer/ Clerk of the Court, Clerk by N. Osollo, Deputy

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