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IRVINE WEEKLY

AUGUST 19, 2020 • VOL. 2, NO. 20



ELECTION 2020

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CONTENTS



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NEWS...4

A first look at the candidates running in Irvine's November election.

BY EVAN J. LANCASTER

CULTURE...10

Saving Irvine's Nonprofits: Miracles for Kids.

BY TARA FINLEY

ART...14

Terra Incognito: New exhibition at OC Center for Contemporary Art.

BY LIZ GOLDNER

FOOD...17

Mochi Donuts available at two new spots in Irvine.

BY SAM HINGCO

MUSIC...19

What SoCal's live music landscape looks like moving forward.

BY BRETT CALLWOOD

ENTERTAINMENT...22

Movie Guide: Black is King, The Go-Go's, The Fight and more.

BY LINA LECARO, CHUCK WILSON AND BRETT CALLWOOD

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ELECTION PREVIEW

OPINION EDITORIAL

IRVINE CITY ELECTION: KEEP FOCUS ON LOCAL ISSUES

BY: IRVINE WEEKLY EDITORIAL BOARD

Important decisions will be made by voters in Irvine come November. With fewer than 90 days until the November 3 election, and the potential of having time subtracted for mail-in voting, time is of the essence for voters to thoroughly vet the candidates we chose to represent us.

Irvine is a special city – a different city – where a diverse population demands the highest quality of governance from those we chose to elect. It is for that reason that Irvine is a model city boasting tremendous schools, a strong housing market, a vibrant workforce, world class health care and is consistently atop of the list of the safest cities in the United States.

For all those reasons, we must remember that it is critical that those whom we elect to City Council and mayor must have a commitment to local issues and the local community.

We worry that all-to-often local political campaigns attempt to divide and polarize our community by making national politics and its increasing divisiveness the centerpiece of the debate. Be wary of any candidates that use campaign materials focusing on national issues or the presidential race instead of the issues that make this city, this community, a special one.

At Irvine Weekly, we focus on community news from a hyper-local perspective. And our opinion content will be aimed at holding candidates accountable, committed and focused to real local issues: like accountability and transparency of city government and its elected leadership; like high quality schools; like responsible stewardship of city resources; like encouraging health care innovation; and, perhaps most importantly, public safety.

And, with more than a dozen candidates working for just two City Council seats, and four additional candidates running for mayor in November, these local issues become more relevant than ever.

The race for two seats on the City Council is packed. It will be a mix of first-time and long-time politicians, including current council members. The office of mayor has a mix of candidates that includes current Irvine Mayor Christina Shea, who is looking to be re-elected. One of the three challengers for the seat is current Irvine Councilmember Farrah Khan.

As Election Day inches ever closer, expect to be bombarded with mailers, phone calls, TV ads, digital ads and more – but hopefully not candidates knocking on our doors given COVID-19. With that, keep in mind that the candidates most knowledgeable about local issues are the candidates we should elect. Let's not let anyone bring the divisive national politics to our special city community.



ELECTION PREVIEW: CITY OF IRVINE

A FIRST LOOK AT THE CANDIDATES VYING TO REPRESENT OUR CITY.

BY EVAN LANCASTER

As the city of Irvine gears up for the November 3 elections, there will be a total of 14 candidates running for two City Council seats, along with four candidates running for the mayor of Irvine.

While COVID-19 and the resulting shutdowns are on the minds of voters and candidates, this year's campaigning process will be different. Candidates will have to adjust to a world with limited access to valuable one-on-one time, or even in-person discussions with voters. While candidates are confident that the city's voting centers will be a benefit to last-minute voters, some candidates emphasized a need to vote as early as possible. There will be plenty to track in both the City Council and mayor contests. There are 14 candidates running to fill only two City Council seats – the seat of Melissa Fox who is running for state Assembly and the seat of appointed Councilman Mike Carroll, who is running for election to the seat. Carroll was appointed to fill the seat when a vacancy on the council occurred because Don Wagner was elected to the Orange County Board of Supervisors.

There are 4 candidates running for mayor including incumbent Mayor Christina Shea. Challenging

Mayor Shea for the mayoral post are Councilmember Farrah Khan, newcomer Luis Huang, a full-time engineering project manager within the electric vehicle industry, and Katherine Daigle, a perennial candidate who is running for a fourth time.

Aside from the City Council and mayoral race, Irvine residents will have their say in some other major races. At the congressional level, Rep. Katie Porter will be facing off against Mission Viejo Councilmember Greg Rath. Irvine Councilmember Melissa Fox will be running against incumbent Steven Choi (a former Irvine mayor) for California State Assembly District 68. Additionally, in Assembly District 74, which covers a portion of Irvine, incumbent Cottie Petrie-Norris and Newport Beach Councilwoman Diane Dixon will compete. As for the state Senate, incumbent Senator John Moorlach will be defending his seat in District 37 against Democrat Dave Min.

As November approaches, we'll learn more about each candidate and provide in-depth coverage on the ground. For the mayoral and City Council races, Irvine Weekly reached out to all the candidates to learn more about their priorities, why they're running and why they deserve your vote.

Here's an introduction to those running for office:

ELECTION PREVIEW



Christina Shea



Farrah N. Khan



Katherine Daigle



Carrie O'Malley

MAYOR:

Christina Shea (Incumbent)

Mayor Shea is practically a household name in Irvine. She has been a member of the City Council and mayor multiple times and is known as one of the leaders to make the Great Park a reality after years of slow progress.

In a statement about her candidacy, Shea writes: "Unstable times require stable leadership." As she prepares for her re-election campaign for another term as mayor of Irvine, she indicates that public safety will be her top priority, maintaining a safe, protected and vibrant community.

Shea believes that her experience as an elected official will help lead Irvine into the future, where it has been recognized as the safest city in America for the last 15 years. Shea's campaign website states she's "always been a strong supporter of local law enforcement" and is "dedicated to sound fiscal responsibility for both the present and the future."

Luis Huang

Luis Huang is one of four candidates running for mayor of Irvine. Huang is 33 years old, an Irvine resident, small business owner and real estate investor. Huang has no prior political experience and will be running against Irvine heavyweights.

According to his candidate statement, Huang is running as a Dem-Socialist and says Bernie Sanders is his political idol.

While Huang did not respond to Irvine Weekly's interview request, his candidate statement says he's interested in "building a community and a movement, in and around Irvine."

Farrah Khan

Irvine Councilmember Farrah Khan is one of four candidates running for mayor of Irvine in the 2020 election. She was elected to the City Council for the first time in 2018.

Khan has aligned herself with prominent Democrats in the community. She has endorsements from Congresswoman Katie Porter, Assemblywoman Cottie Petrie-Norris, and former Irvine mayors Beth Krom and Sukhee Kang to help create awareness of her campaign for Irvine mayor.

"I'm running for mayor because we need leadership that is not only stable, but one that is ready to take on the challenges of tomorrow and establishes honesty, integrity and respect on the council," she told Irvine Weekly. "We're faced with a pandemic which has led to economic uncertainty for many. And we're dealing with social justice issues that require us to listen to the voices coming from our community in order to make our city inclusive and safe for everyone. This is the time to review where we are and take the necessary actions today, in order to come out of this pandemic and this economic and social crisis, successfully."

Katherine Daigle

Thirty-year Irvine resident Katherine Daigle is a political columnist for Politichicks.com and Christian Times Magazine. The 2020 election will be her fourth time running for the office of Irvine mayor.

In terms of top priorities, if elected, Daigle says she would like to see Irvine more prepared for the future. "As mayor I will provide transparency, taxpayer accountability for the Great Park, transportation and budget, and introduce a homelessness task force," she said in an interview with Irvine Weekly. "As stewards, we are responsible for preserving and protecting environmental resources for future generations."

While COVID-19 will present challenges to every candidate, Daigle said she is working with social media experts to help with her campaign.

CITY COUNCIL:

Mike Carroll (Incumbent)

Currently serving as vice mayor of Irvine, Mike Carroll was appointed to the Irvine City Council in May 2019 to fill a vacancy. He has also served on numerous community commissions, including the Irvine Planning Commission.

Carroll's candidate statement also lists his community volunteer contributions, which include president of the Vista Verde K-8 School Foundation, and former director of the Orange County Press Club.

Touting his track record on the council, Carroll says he helped to establish the first free COVID-19 testing in the city, and helped small businesses secure loans during the pandemic.

While Carroll did not respond to Irvine Weekly's interview request, this election Carroll is promising that he will continue fighting to "provide our Irvine Police with what they need to ensure Irvine remains the safest city in the United States," according to his candidate statement.

Anshul Garg

Anshul Garg is an Irvine resident, running for one of the two seats available on the Irvine City Council. Garg vows to remain transparent and says a strong law enforcement equals a safe neighborhood, according to his candidate statement.

"Irvine is known for its schools and education; I will strive to keep the high standard of education. COVID-19 pandemic caught us unprepared. I will work tirelessly to make the city and citizens better prepared for such a disaster. Small and local businesses are the backbone of a strong city. I will work wholeheartedly to understand the obstacles and resolve them. I will ensure that city planning includes the impact of increasing traffic congestion. Most importantly – I will work tirelessly on the job you want me to take."

Carrie O'Malley

Longtime Irvine resident Carrie O'Malley campaigned for a seat on the Irvine

ELECTION PREVIEW



Christina Dillard



Abigail Pole



John Park



Larry Agran

City Council once before, but fell short in 2018. O'Malley is returning to the campaign trail for the 2020 election.

O'Malley serves as district director and senior policy advisor in a California State Assembly District. While it's been two years since the city's last election, O'Malley told Irvine Weekly that her attitude has not changed, as she remains determined to win the election come November.

A former chairwoman for the Irvine Transportation Commission, O'Malley also served as Senior Government Relations Representative at the Orange County Transportation Authority. O'Malley says she will use her background in transportation to help alleviate traffic congestion on the streets of Irvine, as she has in the past.

"I have a lot of great contacts at OCTA that I've kept throughout the decades I worked there," O'Malley explained. "There's something that OCTA is spearheading called OC Flex which is kind of like Uber. They will take anyone within the city limits – for \$5.00 a day. I think it would be a great option for Irvine, and I'd love to spearhead it when I'm on the City Council."

Christina Dillard

Christina Dillard is a 24-year-old single mother who is studying at Irvine Valley College to be a paralegal and has aspirations to become a family law attorney.

Dillard is a first-time politician running for a seat on the Irvine City Council. In an interview with Irvine Weekly, Dillard

explained that she's running because she believes the Irvine City Council lacks the perspectives she identifies with.

"I felt that nobody accurately spoke for any of the demographics I identify with. So I chose to be the voice for a lot of the demographics I represent, such as single parents, the mental disabled and gay communities. I felt like a lot of people speak up for the veterans around here, but every other category I felt somewhere was slipping, so I really wanted to step up and be that voice."

Dillard said she wants to improve parking and traffic congestion around Irvine. If elected to the Irvine City Council, Dillard said she wants local businesses, like Blizzard, to hire locally to ensure that tax breaks are earned, not given. When asked if campaigning during a pandemic would pose an issue to her candidacy, Dillard said her unique background in esports and gaming prepared her for an all-digital campaign. Considering her interest gaming, she said she's learned how successful running a digital-only campaign can be from watching streamers.

"I started to see the shift to the online world, and I'm a gamer so I used to watch streamers all the time, and they don't do in-person events – like, at all," she said to Irvine Weekly.

Diana Jiang

Businesswoman and community volunteer Diana Jiang is a self-described "soccer mom" and mother-of-two, who has lived in Irvine with her husband for

26 years.

Jiang is the co-chair of the Irvine's Children, Youth and Families Advisory Committee, and is also a member of UCI's Social Science Leadership Society.

"Professionally, I earned a Master's Degree in Engineering and have been building and driving highly successful software development teams. Technology has many applications to successfully running a city. With both, results don't just happen – they take significant input, collaboration, planning and execution to achieve desired outcomes."

Abigail Pole

After recently graduating from UC Irvine, 22-year-old undergraduate researcher Abigail Pole said she fell in love with the city and community, and is now taking the opportunity to give back by running for the City Council.

In her candidate statement, Pole shared her vision for the future of Irvine: "Planning for the future requires taking into account the lives of all Irvine residents and providing an environment that permits growth, both personally and economically. To do this, a candidate needs to be willing and able to empathize with the unique struggles of every Irvine family."

Dylan Green

Another candidate eyeing one of two Irvine City Council seats is Dylan Green, a graduate student researcher who has completed all his education in Irvine and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. at UCI.

Green has lived in Irvine for more than a decade, and his involvement in the community has included officiating youth sports and assisting students with musicals and talent shows.

Green says he is using his platform to give back to the community: "I have lived my life trying to be kind, fair and lift those around me. I will do the same on the City Council. When the ocean rises, we all rise with it, and for that reason it is time to focus on you, the people of Irvine. I will be an advocate for limiting special interests, increasing transparency, and the rights of the common citizen."

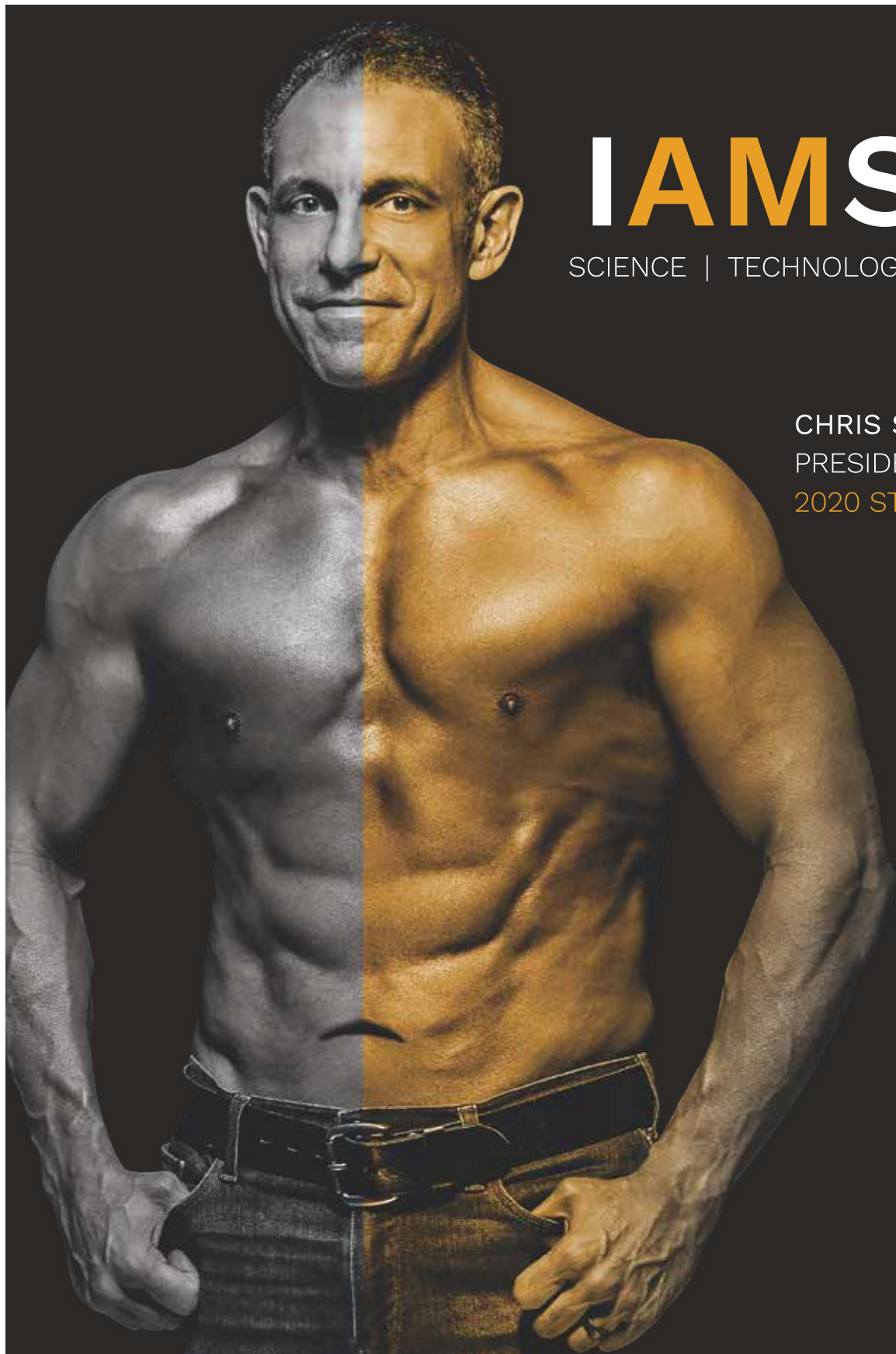
Hai Yang Liang

Hai Yang Liang is a retired Army Master Sergeant, who has been deployed three times during his 27-year service. Liang currently works as a Census Field Manager in Santa Ana.

If elected, Liang's promises include working with community leaders and health experts to provide "common sense guidelines for schools and businesses in response to COVID-19."

In his candidate statement, Liang says he wants to address the worsening traffic situation in Irvine and the lack of exercise equipment in public parks.

He writes in his candidate statement: "I love our city. Listening, reasoning and decisive action are the keys to succeed. All of the lessons of my lifetime will be used to better service you. I will be humble, transparent, accountable and responsive to you, the people of Irvine. And together we will build a better,



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ELECTION PREVIEW

more prosperous city.”

John Park

John Park has called Irvine home for more than two decades. A husband and father of three, Park now has a 16-year tenure as a business owner in Irvine. He is also an active Irvine Rotarian, a commissioner on the Irvine Finance Commission, and serves on the mayor's advisory committee.

Park's 2020 campaign will be his second for the Irvine City Council. Park fell short in 2018, but says his candidacy may have been viewed as “out of nowhere” considering his lack of political involvement within Irvine at the time. However, Park, who is a Republican, says much has changed as he now has the support and endorsement from all Republican elected officials in Irvine.

“I think that I am, in a sense, uniquely qualified, probably much more than ever, to be on the City Council, because of my thoughts about being a fiscal conservative as well as a steward of the city financially because I feel like there are going to be a lot of tough decisions ahead,” Park said in an interview with Irvine Weekly. “I think it's going to require somebody that has worked with budgets in the hundreds of millions of dollars, as I have.”

As far as campaigning in a pandemic, Park says he's at an advantage this year due to his involvement in the city. However, he's also banking on his business, which is a digital advertising agency, helping deliver his message to a specifically targeted audience via social media.

Larry Agran

Former Irvine Mayor and Councilmember Larry Agran has entered the Irvine's 2020 election race, looking to return to the council. Agran lost his last bid for election in Irvine in 2014 when a ferocious campaign against him attacked him for mismanagement of the Great Park, among other allegations.

Agran is a longtime fixture in Irvine, and a political mastermind. Most recently he has made the Veteran's Memorial Park and Cemetery at a specific site his main political issue.

“If we're going to get the Veteran's Memorial Park and Cemetery built at the ARDA site, which is where the residents of Irvine, the voters of Irvine, the will of the people in Irvine is, I think it's going to require I be on the council and I'm ready and willing to offer my candidacy with that express promise,” he says. Even



Lauren Johnson-Norris

though there is consensus on the council for the cemetery project.

In an interview with Irvine Weekly, Agran explained that another top-of-mind goal is to establish a city-based Department of Health with experienced public health personnel in Irvine.

“It's very clear that the county government and our city government are woefully unprepared and we need much, much better preparedness, here in Irvine. We have no public health officer, we have no department of public health at the city,” he said. “Considering what's at stake here, it's a top priority, obviously, for the new City Council, which I hope includes me. They need to set up a Department of Public Health – quickly.”

Laura Bratton

Laura Bratton is an Irvine resident who is running for a seat on the Irvine City Council. Bratton believes a bi-partisan council is the key to Irvine's future success.

In order to preserve the unique quality of life in Irvine, Bratton says she will push for safer workplace environments and wage equality programs geared toward women and minorities. Irvine Weekly was not able to speak with Bratton directly, but her candidate statement included the following:

“Now is the time to have deeper conversations amongst the people of Irvine; ensuring we are moving forward as a community towards equality for all residents regardless of economic background.”

Lauren Johnson-Norris

Lauren Johnson-Norris is a small busi-



Tammy Kim

ness owner and an attorney. She also serves as chair of the Irvine Children, Youth and Families Advisory Committee.

Johnson-Norris and her husband are homeowners in Irvine's University Park community where they live with their twin 7-year-old daughters.

Irvine's 2020 elections will be Johnson-Norris' second campaign for the Irvine City Council. She said that despite knocking on 18,000 doors during the 2018 elections, the campaign fell short.

“What's going to be different this year, is that it's just not safe to knock on people's doors and expect them to have a conversation with you, like we would in the past,” she explained to Irvine Weekly. “But, I want to provide a positive example of staying home right now, and if you are going out, you're wearing a mask, you're social distancing, you're taking all the precautions you can to protect yourself and also the community. And that eliminates that possibility of doing a robust field campaign that you usually need to succeed.”

In terms of priorities, Johnson-Norris said she is passionate about supporting the city's affordable housing efforts, along with efforts to support affordable childcare.

Additionally, Johnson-Norris said she wants to see environmentally sound efforts to introduce more green technology in Irvine to combat climate change locally.

“I'm passionate about how our city can fight climate change, as a city, but there are additional conservation efforts,” she said. “I developed a climate action plan. I know the city has one that's part of our

general plan, but I'd like to implement some green solutions to fight climate change.”

Mark Newgent

With more than two decades of military service, Irvine resident Mark Newgent is looking to use his experience as a means for a seat on the Irvine City Council.

Newgent is a retired Army Captain with 20 years of service, including military police service as well as serving as an anti-terrorism officer and security advisor to the Pacific region.

Newgent, who is also a father of two, said he is using his children as motivation for his candidacy. On his website, Newgent shared a photo from his days of deployment, where he is surrounded by dozens of school-aged children. In a statement, Newgent explained the photo was taken at a school in a combat zone, and feels he still maintains a duty to protect children from the horrors of war:

“The U.S. Army prepared me for everything, except seeing children on the battlefield. I saw first-hand how people suffer when governments break down. This photo is from the first time I went to a combat zone when we protected many things. Most importantly we protected the kids at this school. The kids in the photo are happy because they knew as long as we were there they were going to live.”

Tammy Kim

Tammy Kim is a business owner and a mother. She is also the founder and managing director of the Korean American Center, which after merging with Korean Community Services, is one of the largest Asian-American social service organizations in Orange County.

Kim is running for one of the two seats available on the Irvine City Council and comes equipped with endorsements from Congresswoman Katie Porter, Assemblywoman Cottie Petrie-Norris, and former Irvine mayors Beth Krom and Sukhee Kang.

Kim is seeking a City Council seat because she is upset with the direction of the city:

“Irvine has really lost its way, and I feel that the quality of life that we look for in Irvine was slowly deteriorating and things were starting to go very unchecked,” she said in an interview with Irvine Weekly. “In order to protect our quality of life here in Irvine, I felt like I had to be that voice.”

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2019 Night of Miracles
Autumn and Kids



SAVING IRVINE'S NONPROFITS

MIRACLES FOR KIDS CONTINUES TO SUPPORT A COMMUNITY IN NEED.

BY TARA FINLEY • PHOTOS COURTESY OF MIRACLES FOR KIDS

There has been a lot of talk and aid surrounding drowning industries since the COVID pandemic began. From #TakeOutTuesday to artist assistance funds, well-deserving businesses and their staff have seen galvanized support from social media and their communities these past few months.

However, not every organization or business that needs help is getting it. An oft-overlooked sector of pandemic economic casualties are nonprofits, as they struggle to continue to support their clients and pay their staff. While all of us are just trying to make it through the day – given the never-ending stressors of 2020 – *Irvine Weekly* does think it's vital to shine some much-needed light on those in our community that could use a helping hand if you have one free.

Like all businesses, nonprofits have had to constantly stretch and pivot in order to keep up with the ever-changing rules and regulations of operating during a pandemic.

Local organizations have each made imperative changes to their fundraising efforts and annual events to ensure their families are supported. However, the hits keep coming. In-person galas and fundraising events are unlikely to take place for the remainder of 2020, and the future of 2021 remains unclear. So what will these nonprofits do to ensure their mission of support is able to be served?

We've been talking to the dedicated leaders of Irvine's nonprofits to learn what's next for them, and how we as a community can help.

Miracles for Kids helps support the families of children suffering from vari-

ous critical illnesses by providing financial and emotional support, housing, household essentials and supplies, and more. Fighting a life-threatening illness requires an immense time commitment and often results in depleted savings or income loss – making their mission more important than ever as COVID-19 rages throughout the county.

While we are all grumbling about a few months of quarantine, the families and children that rely on Miracles for Kids are all too used to the isolating lifestyle. Given their critically weakened immune systems, COVID-19 has essentially cut them off from everything, for fear of catching a virus their body cannot fight.

"We serve a highly vulnerable population – families with critically-ill children – so when COVID hit we had to

restructure hours and accelerate programming in order to ensure we could be there for those who needed us most," explains Autumn Strier, co-founder and CEO of Miracles for Kids. "Prior to the shutdown, we trained staff on how to work from home, accessing files and utilizing our VOIP system to communicate. We instituted a rotating staff schedule to ensure less than 10 staff were onsite at any time, and rolled out health and safety protocols immediately."

Have they seen an increased need arise in the communities they serve?

"The need for our services has been overwhelming, as the families we serve battle job loss, risk of homelessness and mental crisis," answers Strier.

Miracles for Kids is working their hardest to step up their support by providing household essentials that can be difficult



Autumn Strier
2019 Holiday Basket of Miracles



Miracle Manor Construction



2019 Night of Miracles
Lindsay and Anthony Geisler
with Autumn Strier

to get at a grocery store and dangerous for the family to pick up on their own – calling these donations “Spring Baskets of Miracles.” In addition to much-needed supplies, the organization also implemented a virtual campaign to provide social outlets and lift the spirits of these kids and families. Known as the Virtual Messages of Kindness campaign, this is an easy way for the community to send encouraging words to these kids and their families whether it’s via email, text, mail or a video shared on social media.

“We have dramatically increased the use of our social media platforms – Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn – as well as personal emails, e-blasts and the media to share the stories of our families and their needs,” shares Strier. “In a time when digital is the primary way to communicate, it has truly helped us bridge the distance between the community and those in need.”

However, not all things can easily be made digital.

“Many of our programs and outreach already had a digital or online component, but for those that did not – such as our new 360° Miracle women’s giving circle – we had to reach out to one of our corporate partners for their assistance with building a digital interface,” Strier furthers. “We also increased and restructured our social media platforms, making sure to use specific content and algorithms that maximize exposure.”

Thankfully, Miracles for Kids has been able to continue to support those who need them, due to the unwavering support of their community partners. They’ve been able to pivot their annual events to fall in line with quarantine criteria, but it’s no easy task.

“Our events are a large part of our annual revenue and the primary way we raise funds to support our mission and we are blessed to have a community of supporters who have agreed to stand by us this fall, regardless of the format. We have, and will continue to, adhere to all

guidelines set forth by the county and state,” says Strier.

What’s next for Miracles for Kids?

“Our families were in crisis prior to the pandemic trying to support their ill child,” answers Strier. “Today, their instability has increased substantially as a result of the pandemic’s impact on the economy.”

“Nearly 80% of those we serve have lost their source of income,” she expands. “This means they need us now more than ever, so our focus is going to be on continuing to build out digital fundraising platforms, touchless engagement environments, communication avenues, and more – so we can keep donors and the community at large in touch with the devastation happening around all of us.”

Most importantly, how can the Irvine community help?

“Our families need basic resources to function every day, but they have very limited means, so most families must

do without. This is where our Kindness Box of Miracles comes in – a delivery program born early in the pandemic, where we fill and ship 300+ boxes to our families each month – filled with items such as grocery and gas cards, PPE, cleaning supplies, clothing, food and toys/games/books for the children. We are in need of donations to fill these boxes,” answers Strier.

“Miracles for Kids is successful at supporting critically-ill children and families because of incredible local community support over the last 15+ years. We have volunteers of every age and ability, corporate partners of every size, and community groups of every type – all doing what they can to make a difference,” she says. “If you are reading this, and you are considering donating an hour or a dollar – we would be honored, and your donation truly valued.”

To donate to Miracles for Kids, visit <https://miraclesforkids.org/take-action/donate/>

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Eric Stoner
The Burned Over District

TERRA INCOGNITO

NEW EXHIBITION EXPLORES THE CREATIVE TERRITORY INHABITED BY FIVE ARTIST COUPLES.

BY LIZ GOLDNER

To tour “Terra Incognita” is to delve into the personal and often idiosyncratic worlds of five artist couples.

Their combined works in this Orange County Center for Contemporary Art (OCCCA) exhibition reveal a variety of art disciplines, including painting, sculpture,

assemblage and photography.

The show’s title, meaning “The Unknown Land,” alludes conceptually to the five couples’ distinctive, artistic interplay, as well as to their private art studios. Yet as most of these artist couples do not work collaboratively – as did the late Christo and his wife Jean-Claude – some of their

finished art pieces differ dramatically in style, materials, technique and appearance from each other. Yet these differences often become the fertile ground for their creativity.

For example, Jeff Gillette and Laurie Hasold create side by side while consulting with and critiquing each other. Jeff is a

painter and assemblage artist, working in oil and found materials; and Laurie is a sculptor, employing metals, wire, ceramics and even animal head models in her work. Part of their commonality is that both artists explore in their work a universal dystopia, when humans are diminished or have vanished from our planet.

Gillette is famous in part for his “Dismayland” paintings, some displayed by the famed yet elusive British artist Banksy. Yet for this show, he exhibits his “Slumscape” paintings. These architecturally accurate depictions of slums in India and other impoverished countries – including his painting “Power Puff Beach” – are enhanced by Disney characters, some of



Laurie Hassold
Sad Puppy



Victoria Reynolds
Sirloin Sanctorum
30x18in.



Crystal Yachin Lee
BlauenDonau46

them bearing frightened expressions, and most hovering in the air.

Hassold's intricate, otherworldly and eerily beautiful sculptures are inspired by her fascination with fossils, skeletal remains, science fiction and fairy tales. These "Future Fossils," as she calls them, are insect-like creatures that will survive our planet long after humans have extinguished themselves.

Eric Stoner's large, intricate collages reveal his penchant to imbue his pieces with a variety of found materials. These include cut-out images from photos (he is a professional photographer), pictures from art books, vintage postcards, pages from flyers and magazines, silk flowers and especially in this show, toy dinosaurs and other prehistoric animals. He then hammers the many pieces of detritus onto wood panels. His inspiration for "The Great Zion Riff" and other paintings in this show are fossils from the late Jurassic period that he looked at as a child, along with the work of Hieronymus Bosch and Pieter Breughel.

His partner, Stephanie McManus, who has driven many miles throughout the American west with him, creates oil paintings, such as "Beach Path," inspired by their travels. These calm, luminous artworks, perhaps influenced by Califor-

nia Impressionism, are a counterpoint to Stoner's work.

Robin Repp and husband Robert H. Repp are photographers who travel together and take pictures. Their completed works, while alluding to similar scenes, are very different from each other's in technique, intention and appearance. Robin's large black and white infrared images, often of barren landscapes, with one titled, "The Last Tree," explore the effects of climate change on our land. Her work includes disappearing glaciers and a SoCal bird refuge. As Laurie Hassold explores in her work, Robin anticipates in her images an unknown future.

Robert's color images employ muted earth tones and are more abstract and conceptual than are Robin's. While his work is inspired by their mutual travels, he often begins a piece by looking at digital images. He then abstracts a segment from that image, which he chooses for its color or composition or both, and enlarges that section until it takes on the appearance of a landscape. Creating his digital photos with titles as "More Mars" and "Mars Surface," he explains, "I feel like I am painting images, employing photography as a point of departure for devising my own fictional realms."

Joe Forkan's oil paintings differ from

other art pieces in this multi-faceted exhibition in their apparent inspiration by modern art, perhaps by the early modern landscapes of Paul Cézanne and by the more recent, abstract work of California's Richard Diebenkorn.

To create these local Santa Ana scenes, with titles as "Raking Light, Spurgeon" and "Standing Water, Bush Street," he focuses his attention on light, color and on his own perceptual engagement with specific places, as he explains. Employing bright primary and complementary colors, along with geometric forms and grid patterns, his paintings in this show – while a small representation of his much larger body of work – reveal an artist who revels in the process of working with forms, shapes, lines, color and the harmonious relationships of all of these.

Forkan's partner, Crystal Yachin Lee, produces work with a similar modernist appearance. Yet she creates her pastoral images using only the camera. Her images in this exhibition, all from her "Balloons" series, depict colorful hot-air balloons, set against bright blue skies, some with striated white clouds. She explains that this work is "inspired by Chinese painting and calligraphy, in which negative space (white space) is considered part of the composition."

Superstar artist Jeffrey Vallance, and his partner Victoria Reynolds, grace this exhibition with their poultry-inspired paintings and collages. Vallance's "Martyr Hen collage with holy cards and metal icon" features a large whole raw chicken as its centerpiece; it is then surrounded by pictures of various holy figures, presumably from Catholicism. His "The Visible Blinky" features a similarly large chicken, but this one is of a live bird, surrounded by smaller birds and by canned products containing poultry parts.

Vallance collaborated with Reynolds to paint the oil, "Blinky Palermo." This work simply features a store-bought chicken, which is ready to be stuffed, seasoned and put into the oven.

Whether Vallance's and Reynolds' paintings pay homage to the glory of eating chicken or are intended to inspire viewers to become vegetarians is unclear. Yet the artists' humor, out-of-the-box perspectives and deft artistry have helped propel them to what may be described as "iconic" status.

"Terra Incognita" is on view through October 17, 2020, at Orange County Center for Contemporary Art, Santa Ana; Hours by appointment only due to COVID-19; 714-667-1517; <http://www.occca.org/2020-08.html>

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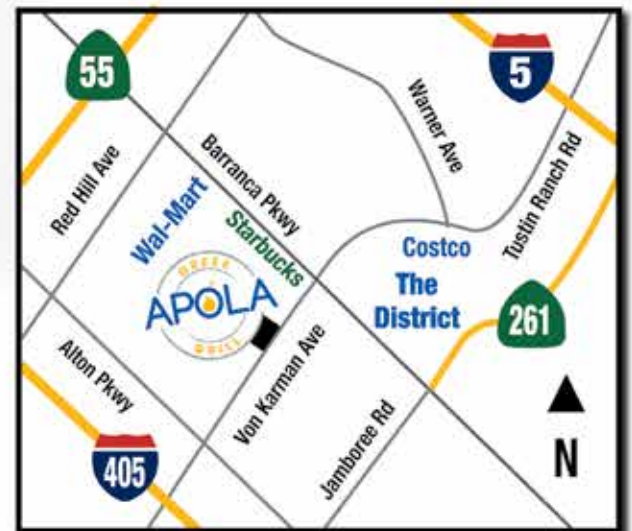
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Photo by Sam Hingco

MOCHI DONUTS HAVE ARRIVED

TWO NEW SHOPS BRING THE LATEST FOOD CRAZE TO IRVINE.

BY SAM HINGCO

Irvine is notorious for its incredible food scenario, having a shop for almost any kind of food you are craving. From ube ice cream filled fish cake to jiggly Japanese soufflé pancakes, Irvine is always on top of the latest food trends. Despite all the food crazes throughout Irvine, mochi donuts are one of the only trends that have yet to infiltrate the Irvine food scenery – until just a few weeks ago.

With mochi donuts rising as one of the latest Instagram trends, Irvine is finally hopping on the bandwagon, introducing two new shops which offer this sweet chewy delicacy. Because of the buzz over this trend, crowds of people crave these heavenly bites. Despite the immense amount of people who crave mochi donuts, both of these new shops instill regulations that ensure the safety of each and every customer in the midst of this pandemic.

Mochi donuts combine both the

traditional American donut along with Japanese mochi, incorporating sweet glutinous rice flour for a chewier texture that many enjoy much more than the classic American donut.

Mochinut

Mochinut and Chung Chun are the same company, located at a singular food stall inside Zion Market. One of the most unique aspects of Mochinut is that they also sell Korean rice hotdogs and boba teas. Because of their popularity, it is best to arrive a few hours before closing since they typically run out quickly.

This tiny stall is an absolute trap for foodies. Just this singular booth sells mochi donuts, cheese hot dogs, as well as boba tea. Mochinut offers three to four new flavors a day, announced via their Instagram page, including guava, milk tea, melon and even a banana milk flavor. A half dozen costs \$16.50 while a full dozen is \$33.

Mochinut has gained quite the traction in Los Angeles, and has now opened its second Orange County location in Irvine; the first being in Garden Grove. Being one of the only two Mochinuts, and one of the very few mochi donut shops in Orange County, Mochinut has a considerable audience. Due to social distancing mandates, they ensure minimal to zero contact with the food while in the cooking and packaging process. Along with that, Zion Market checks each individual's temperature upon entrance. They also are available on DoorDash, Postmates and Uber Eats. Mochinut will soon be offering online pre-ordering for their customers.

Make sure to check out Mochinut if you're in the Northwood area and grab yourself a warm donut along with a refreshing sip of boba tea to cool down!

MoDo Hawaii

MoDo Hawaii is located within one of

Mitsuwa's stalls, side by side with other Japanese eateries. Coming all the way from Honolulu, MoDo Hawaii is a pop-up now available for Irvine residents. Like Mochinut, they rotate their flavors, offering three new flavors a day, available to view via their website. Their pricing, in comparison to other mochi donut shops, is very reasonable with a half dozen priced at \$12.

MoDo Hawaii makes it possible for the public to delve into the latest food trends while still obeying social distancing mandates. To order your own box, MoDo makes this process as efficient and comfortable as possible, utilizing online appointment slots in which each customer must use to buy their donuts. You select the date, time and order, then pick up the donuts at your designated appointment time. Through this very efficient online ordering system, they comply with distancing guidelines and avoid a significant crowd.

Unlike many other mochi donut shops or simply donut shops in general, MoDo Hawaii serves each and every order so they're "always hot & fresh." Since they know when to expect each customer, all their orders are served warm for each individual to savor.

MoDo is definitely a spot to check out if you are craving a warm and luscious dessert after a long day.



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Drive-In OC's Andrew McMahon show
Photo by Steve Thrasher.



NO STAGEDIVING, NO MOSHING, NO CROWD SURFING

WHAT THE LIVE MUSIC LANDSCAPE WILL LOOK LIKE MOVING FORWARD.

BY BRETT CALLWOOD

Back in December, when we published the story "No Access: Why Rising Concert Prices Increasingly Put Big Shows Out of Our Reach," we had no idea of the horrors that 2020 was about to present us with. That story explored the fact that, with recorded music no longer a viable means to generate income for most artists, the gap was being partially bridged through more expensive tickets.

But the last seven months, and the COVID-related nightmare, have changed everything. Of course, while people are dying, live music and its survival is not a priority. That said, at some

point in the future people are going to attempt to host some sort of live entertainment, and it's worth having a close look at what that might look like.

At the moment, the first concert on the calendar for Inglewood arena the Forum is Five Finger Death Punch on October 22, and the ticket prices (around \$50-\$100) look fairly standard. But how much that is going to change between now and then remains to be seen, because surely venues that hold that many people are going to have to implement social distancing rules – not just in October but most likely for the foreseeable future. Therefore, with less people in the venues

but musicians and staff still needing payment, we would expect to see those changes reflected in the ticket prices. There's so much that is still up in the air and we're going to have to wait and see how it all manifests itself.

Big changes are necessary and concert venues, promoters, bookers, etc are having to get inventive in order to survive. As we mentioned in last week's cover story, one route being actively explored is drive-in concerts. Jordan Harding of Drive-In OC has been hosting concerts for several weeks at the City National Grove of Anaheim featuring the likes of Andrew McMahon and Common Kings.

There were, he says, a lot of logistics to consider.

"We effectively created a new venue outside of our traditional venue," Harding says. "There were a lot of things we had to think through, including restrooms, food and beverage, merchandise, staging, sound and lights, parking – all of those things we had to really think through from the very beginning, creating a new venue if you will. People are craving live entertainment right now and artists are craving performance opportunities. So, we put our heads together to figure out a way to make it happen."

Similar events had taken place in Europe, as well as nearby Ventura, so there was a precedent that Drive-In OC could refer to. Still, there are questions. Even if people stay in their car, how do the restrooms work?

"We have an app, and the fan can enter the virtual queue from their own car," Harding says. "We send them a text notification when it's time to head to the venue. We utilize our restrooms inside the facility, regulating capacity. We take the temperature of the guest prior to entry, and we continually sanitize and clean

MUSIC



Photo by Steve Thrasher.

them throughout the night.”

Each car has a designated area of 150 square feet, so they can get out of the driver's side and set up lawn chairs if they wish, while still sticking to the social distancing rules. However, a recent Chainsmokers drive-in concert in the Hamptons saw attendees get out and ignore the rules. How does Harding intend to prevent that sort of chaos – especially if people (not the drivers, we hope) are drinking?

“We have Anaheim Police onsite, we have a significant security presence, to make sure people are following the rules,” he says. “Fans are respectful of the rules because they know that, if they want live entertainment, they have to. We have to protect, keep each other healthy, and be good citizens. I think people are excited to get out of the house and enjoy some live music. So far they’ve been respectful of the guidelines.”

We can hope. The people that do attend are having to pay increased prices for the pleasure, due to the massively reduced capacity.

“It’s an expensive endeavor, there’s no question about that,” Harding says. “There’s high cost for the staging, lights, and then there’s limited capacity. A normal concert, we can do up to about 1700 people. In this scenario, we can do about 275 cars. So, we price everything on a per car basis for the concert, and we limit the number of people in the car as there are seatbelts. We’re encouraging people to come who are part of the same family

unit. People who have been isolating together. But it’s a tough challenge to figure out how to make this model work for drive-in concerts, with high fixed costs and limited capacity. That is being reflected in the ticket prices to a certain extent. Another reason we’re selling food and beverage, [is] to try to recoup some of those expenses.”

It’s not a sustainable long-term business model though. Writing for UK newspaper *The Telegraph*, Ian Winwood covered a July 28, 2020 indoor concert by punk troubadour Frank Turner. The performers, he wrote, appeared without pay and played for a crowd of 200 in a venue that normally holds 1,250.

“Inevitably, it’s a bit of a palaver,” Winwood writes. “Admission to the venue is staggered and features a temperature check, a one-way system, the filling-out of a form, and an in-house ‘test, track and trace’ system. Masked waiting staff are summoned by customers waving rainbow-coloured flags. Despite a bounty of booze behind the bar, by far the most popular alcoholic products are the bottles of hand-sanitiser on each of the 50 tables.”

Of course, not every venue has the capabilities and facilities to host outdoor parking lot shows, or the space to keep a reasonable number of people distanced. As is so often the case, it is the smaller independent venues that will likely suffer the most. In L.A. we’ve recently seen the Satellite close, and more are likely to follow without federal aid. To that end,

the National Independent Venue Association (NIVA) was formed.

“There is no way to over dramatize how much of a crisis we’re in right now,” says Audrey Fix Schaefer, NIVA’s director of communications. “We did a survey of members of the National Independent Venue Association and found that if the shutdown lasts six months or longer and there is no federal assistance, then 90 percent said that they would go under which is absolutely devastating. It should be a big red blinking alarm because we’re four months in now. That’s why we’re fighting so hard to get funding that will assist our survival until we’re able to open safely. The legislation has to get passed and turned into law before Congress goes on recess in August. So, we’ve got two or three weeks now between now and the potential saving of an industry or the collapse of an industry.”

Independent venues, in general, have zero income and 100 percent of their overheads. Plus, they have negative revenue because they’re having to refund concealed concert tickets. Some, including the Whisky A Go Go, have been hosting crowd-less livestreamed shows, but again that isn’t a sustainable long-term plan. Federal aid is going to be necessary, and Schaefer says that they do at least have bipartisan support in the House and Senate.

“That is something that is helping us get up every day and keep developing more support for that,” she says. “That’s an adaptation to the PPP program. Other

PPP programs helped a lot of other businesses, but we’re completely shut down and can’t qualify so we’re asking for a modification so that money can be used for our overheads that are fixed, that we cannot get out of paying – rent, mortgage or utilities. This is an industry that has never come together like this. This organization didn’t exist before the pandemic. We’ve also never individually or collectively gone to lobby Capitol Hill because we’ve always figured out how to survive. But they’re just leaving us in the lurch with no assistance.”

The good news is that we can all help by going to saveourstages.com, and making our voices heard. It takes about 30 seconds, and autopopulates in order to send an email to your senator. Hopefully, we can the message across that this does matter. Because, while drive-in concerts provide welcome relief for now, it’s a temporary relief.

“We’ll keep doing this until the city and county say we can open our doors safely and responsibly,” says Harding. “We’re not sure this is a sustainable business model per say, but at least it’s an opportunity for our staff to get back to work and for us to continue serving the community with live entertainment. It’s a stopgap solution but one that gives people some hope and uplifts the community.”

Drive-In OC hosts Fitz & the Tantrums on Saturday, September 5 and Sunday, September 6 at the City National Grove of Anaheim.

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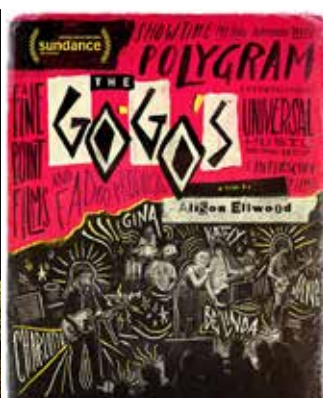
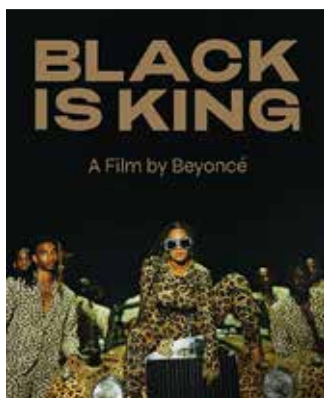
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ENTERTAINMENT

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IRVINE WEEKLY'S MOVIE GUIDE:

BLACK IS KING, THE GO-GO'S, THE FIGHT, RETALIATION AND MORE.

BY LINA LECARO, CHUCK WILSON AND BRETT CALLWOOD

Irvine Weekly's Movie Guide is your look at the hottest films available on your TV sets, electronic devices and in select drive-ins and theaters throughout Southern California. Theaters remain closed, but the good news is that there's no shortage of diverse and engaging films to see at home. And as always, we let you know what's worth the watchtime – from indie art house gems to popcorn-perfect blockbusters to new movies garnering buzz, indicating where you can catch them whether it be digital Video on Demand (VOD) or streaming subscription services.

Black Is King / Disney+

Visually stunning, sonically engaging and all around fierce in its celebration of Black culture and its roots in Africa, Beyoncé's *Black Is King* dropped Friday on Disney+ to the expected stampede of social media commentary and accolades. Like her previous "video album" *Lemonade*, the film – and the 90 minute work should be considered as a full-bodied, if unconventional film – was created to showcase Bey's music, but it's so much more than that.

Inspired by *The Lion King* themed 2019 recording *The Lion King: The Gift* (created to complement the live action/CGI-heavy remake in which she voiced Simba's love interest, Nala) the new film takes on the task of teaching lessons from the film. Self respect, loyalty, and most significantly, connecting with one's ancestry and culture to understand not only one's true self but humanity as a whole are all explored in not so subtle ways.

The timeliness of the project – in the wake

of a global reckoning against racism, not to mention modern feminism's rejection of beauty standards (and how the two intertwine) will escape no one, but Bey has been addressing these issues long before they were zeitgeisty.

From its ethereal, earth-mother opening sequence to the Vogue-shoot like procession of incredible looks and backdrops that follow, *Black Is King* could almost be called "Black is Queen." The female form is jaw-droppingly displayed here via an array of gorgeous black and brown women, of all sizes, with all hair types – dancing, posing, swimming, being... There are men in it too (hubby Jay-Z, world music artist Lord Africa and Wizkid, Kendrick Lamar, Pharrell Williams and Childish Gambino) and the narrative is centered around a male – the young African king Simba – but in a lot of ways this is about honoring the mothers and the sisters who make life possible. After all, in the jungle, it's the females who serve as hunters, gatherers and nurturers, keeping the pride alive in more ways than one. **(Lina Lecaro)**

The Go-Go's / Showtime

The chatter surrounding the release of Alison Ellwood's documentary *The Go-Go's* has been building to fever pitch for months, and one would think that the final product could in no way meet the weight of hype-driven expectation. But much like the band themselves, the movie has smashed through every glass ceiling and naysayer with gleeful abandon and no small amount of care. While it's slightly odd that the film has landed during a global pandemic, it's

also weirdly appropriate. This is a band that didn't do anything the easy way but as we find out, rolled with the punches until they couldn't anymore.

So we start in the early days of the L.A. punk scene (it's mentioned that Charlotte Caffey was in the Eyes, but the wonderful trivia-nugget that Belinda Carlisle was the original drummer in the Germs is missed out). The early live footage, when they were in their ragged punk beginnings at the Masque/Starwood/Whisky, is by itself reason to watch the film.

What's interesting is that, as the music gets tighter and more polished, the story gets messier. Tears are shed as we learn of the pain when former members, especially Margot Olavarria and, later, manager Ginger Canzoneri, are ousted. We share the joy as things go well, embarking on chaotic UK tours with the Specials and Madness, and reaching number one on the Billboard album chart. We watch them rise and, as bitterness and jealousy creeps in, we watch them fall.

The weight of that pain is tempered slightly with the knowledge that they eventually returned, although the last decade's events seem to be rushed slightly here – particularly bassist Kathy Valentine's second departure and return. Still, this is a wonderful documentary movie which will resonate harder with those looking to reminisce/learn about the L.A. punk scene from which the band emerged. **(Brett Callwood)**

The Fight / VOD

In their inspiring but painfully topical new documentary, filmmakers Elyse Steinberg,

Josh Kriegman and Eli Despres (Weiner) follow five ACLU lawyers as they face-off against the Trump administration's on the Muslim travel ban, the transgender military ban, a detained immigrant denied her abortion rights, and the U.S. Census citizenship question.

Jumping from case to case, the filmmakers offer an inside view of the ACLU, an organization 100 years old and always at the forefront of society's wars. Internally, there is sometimes division, as when they defended the rights of the white supremacists who wanted to march on Charlottesville.

The Fight is filled with timely legal battles but it's the reunions that get you. Parents and children, separated for months by the U.S. government are suddenly cleared to reunite in airports and law offices. The mother throws her arms wide, the child rushes in and the two collapse together, often with little sound, as if they learned long ago that in America, there's danger in making a joyful noise. **(Chuck Wilson)**

The Shadow of Violence / limited theaters

Once a promising boxer, now the muscle for Irish gangsters, Douglas "Arm" Armstrong is hulking and handsome, monosyllabic and sad, and in the hands of English musician turned actor Cosmo Jarvis, the heartbreaker of the summer movie season.

Arm's story is familiar. A local boxing star haunted by a death in the ring, he's become the enforcer for his kingpin friend Dympha (Barry Keoghan), who is in turn trying to live up to the brutal legacy of his drug-dealing family, the barely literate but much-feared Deavers of rural West Ireland.

Plying Arm with cocaine, Dympha sends him to kill an old man who's angered the family but Arm can't do it, an act of mercy that will ultimately incur the Deavers' wrath. Originally titled *Calm with Horses*, after a short story by Irish writer Colin Barrett, *The Shadow of Violence* finds its truest suspense in Arm's struggle to be a good father to his autistic son. A scene where he takes the boy to a carnival is nerve-wracking because Arm is so clearly ill-equipped to deal his son's fragility.

First-time director Nick Rowland stages an excellent car chase down hilly country roads, with the camera perched outside Arm's window in a way that feels both low-budget efficient and visually inventive. As the Deavers family noose tightens around Arm, Rowland and screenwriter Joe Murtagh send him to a fancy country house for a finale that proves to be an emotional tour de force for Jarvis, a 30-year-old actor who seems destined to someday set (real) movie screens ablaze. **(Chuck Wilson)**



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