

IRVINE'S OWN ART SUPERSTARS SHELBY + SANDY • ANGELINA'S IS A LITTLE SLICE OF NAPLES IN THE HEART OF IRVINE • WINTER FEST BRINGS ALL THINGS CHRISTMAS TO O.C.

IRVINE WEEKLY

DECEMBER 26, 2018 • No. 6

IRVINE BITES BACK

**IRVINE WEEKLY CATCHES UP WITH THE
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ENTREPRENEURS
WHO APPEARED ON SHARK TANK**

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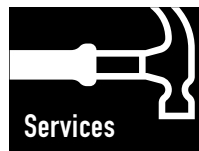
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ON COVER: Design by Nicole Lonberger

For all inquires: publisher@irvineweekly.com



X TO PERFORM AT THE OC OBSERVATORY ON DECEMBER 27TH AND 28TH!

CELEBRATING THEIR 40TH YEAR IN MUSIC, THE BAND IS CURRENTLY ON THEIR "A LOS ANGELES STORY" TOUR

BY: SUSAN HORNIK

PHOTOS BY: RICK NYBURG

Watching a performance of the resilient punk band, X, you get the sense that until their dying breath, Exene Cervenka, Billy Zoom, John Doe and DJ Bonebrake will be giving everything in their soul to the fans.

It's been like that for decades. Last year, the dynamic group – remarkably still together since day one – celebrated its 40th year in music when "X: 40 Years of Punk in Los Angeles" premiered at the Grammy Museum.

Pretty impressive, considering many of their punk peers – Johnny, Dee Dee and Joey Ramone, Joe Strummer, Lux Interior, Sid Vicious, David Bowie, Johnny Thunders, Stiv Bators, etc. – are no longer amongst the living.

This is a busy month for X, who are currently on their "A Los Angeles Story" tour with Los Lobos, performing Dec. 7 at Novo and Dec 27-28 at the Observatory in Orange County.

Doe attributes X's staying power to "good fortune, good genes, good health, and forgiveness." Not to mention a love of performing.

"It is just what we do. Young and old can come to enjoy and maybe get inspired. Performing and playing music keeps you young and is good for the soul," explains Doe.

The enigmatic Doe has also been writing, working on his second book, "More Fun in the New World," profiling L.A. punk rock history from '82-87. It is a non-fiction follow-up to his punk history bestseller, "Under the Big Black Sun."

"This is the sequel to the book we wrote in 2016 and deals with 1982-87. We used a similar format by having several people write chapters about subjects they are experts in," the singer-bassist said.

Doe is one of those rare writers that doesn't let himself get distracted: "I write anytime, anywhere, anyhow and often times that's not convenient. If you hear something, stop what you're doing and write it down."

In "Big Black Sun," which was nominated for a Grammy in the Best Spoken Word Album category, the punk rock historian discussed the punk scene in the O.C.: "The outdoor life that young people of the time grew up with made the O.C. scene much

more physical and sometimes violent. We only experienced it when we played there, which was much less often than the L.A. area."

When he's not playing with X, Doe is involved in a myriad of projects, including executive producing the podcast "Beyond + Back," collaborating with Particle Kid and playing folk music with the John Doe folk trio.

Comparing the two music styles, the singer/songwriter said that while punk is "decidedly louder and faster," folk may require more finesse. Still, "the subject matter and honesty of both is surprisingly similar."

Recently, Doe was in Oklahoma at the Woody Guthrie Center, discussing Bob Dylan's latest album and performing some of his songs.

"Looking at his 3"x 5" memo notebooks was like looking at most other journals/notebooks, but it carried a lot more weight," said Doe. "There were parts of his well-known songs scribbled down in whole chunks. It reminded me to continue a constant work ethic."

Since Doe has acted in more than 50 films and television productions – and with Queen's "Bohemian Rhapsody" film being so successful – maybe the next band to have their life story told on screen could be X!?

"I don't think there will be a movie about X any time soon," quipped Cervenka. "Maybe someday, who knows?! We don't think about that kind of thing much."

Cervenka is very "grateful and stunned" that the band has stayed together all these years.

"We worked hard, went through some great and some hard times, stayed alive somehow and still love playing shows," the singer acknowledged. "But really, it's because people still come out to our shows and support us."

The band is heading back into the studio in January, working with Fat Possum Records. "We're getting ready to record some old songs that never made it onto our albums, plus a few new ones, and at least one cover song," she shared. "We will see how far we get but there are five or six songs we want to rehearse and work out. It's really exciting."

Cervenka is ageless, with a charismatic, youthful spirit. Recently, she wrote a song with Kelli Maryo from Skating Polly. A song that Doe and her co-wrote with Garbage, "Destroying Angels," was just released for Record Store Day.

Perhaps the key to X's success is the desire to keep things feeling fresh.

"You can think that every time on stage

may be your last; or you can feel like it's all brand new," noted Cervenka. "I'm always motivated to play shows. It never gets old to me though it can be physically grueling for sure."

Cervenka has her eye on a few O.C. bands. "The May Company is a cool band that reminds me of The Cramps with a woman guitarist/singer. They are very moody and spooky. I also like The Hurricanes, Big Sandy; the more rootsy music a lot."

The veteran punk icon has always been intrigued by creating poetry, fiction and short stories, spending her down time writing.

"For a long time I wasn't motivated; feeling I had done it all before," she said. "Writing is fun when you are inspired, but there's a lot of work to do after that. Now I am going to workshops and applying myself. So I'm very content with all of that."

Cervenka writes mostly from her home in Orange. "But I can do it anywhere; I really like Downtown Santa Ana; the Frida Movie theater, the new shops, the artwalk."

Cervenka was thrilled X's music has sparked the muse for a young adult writer named Camille A. Collins, whose first book, "The Exene Chronicles," debuted in September.

"I really loved the book and communicated with the author," she enthused. "It is so cool!"

Rick Nyburg, who often photographed the band, was just as much attracted to Cervenka's words as he was their music.

"I told Exene early on, it was her poetry that kept me devoted to the band," Nyburg reminisced. "That is how it started. My best friend from college was Jay Jenkins, who met Doe and Cervenka at the Beyond Baroque poetry workshop in Venice, CA. When they decided to form a band in 1977, he became their manager."

Jenkins asked Nyburg to be the band photographer.

"I was on the permanent guest list from that time on ... from '77 until they passed their peak around '87. What always impressed me at every show was the incredible energy in the room, the devotion of the fans, and the raw power from the band onstage."

Occasionally, Nyburg would go to Cervenka/Doe's house for dinner, and would bring a slideshow of images he had shot to that point.

"Watching X perform was truly an exhilarating experience," Nyburg explained. "They were making music with a power and message that I had never heard, and that was contagious!"



PHOTO BY: BOB HODSON

ANGELINA'S FINDS A HOME IN THE MIDDLE OF IRVINE

THIS LITTLE SLICE OF NAPLES IS SERVING UP THE CITY'S MOST AUTHENTIC NAPOLETANA PIZZA

BY: MICHAEL COOPER

PHOTOS BY: BOB HODSON AND ANNE WATSON



PHOTO BY: BOB HODSON

CHEF JONAH AMODT

A little slice of authentic Naples has found a home, of all places, in the middle of Irvine. Indeed, Angelina's Pizzeria in the Los Olivos Marketplace across the freeway from the Irvine Spectrum has gone out of its way to provide genuine and delicious Italian fare beyond just pizzas.

Angelina's first location opened in Dana Point in 2012 as more of a traditional pizzeria. Four years later, in 2016, the Irvine location opened its doors, becoming the restaurant's bigger and fancier flagship location. "The Dana Point location is smaller pizza, pasta and salads. The Irvine location's focus is more of a showcase," says Angelina's Executive Chef Jonah Amodt. "When

you come in, [there is a wow factor]. When you think of pizzeria, a lot of people think small, [but] when you walk in, the focus is really the ambiance. It's a beautiful location."

That ambiance can be best described as trendy yet approachable. The ceiling of the dining room looks like water, a huge wall displays the restaurant's impressive wine collection and a nice-sized bar directly faces the entrance. The restaurant definitely gives off a modern, loungey vibe, but not too modern that it alienates. All types of guests seemed to be enjoying their dinner on a Saturday night including couples on dates, groups of friends and families.

Perhaps the most noticeable feature in the restaurant is the two Stefano Ferrara

ovens that are featured in plain sight behind the bar. The ovens, which were imported by Angelina's from Italy, are used to cook everything from pizza to steak and fish. It's also how the restaurant is able to offer authentic Neapolitan pizza, which is best described as more doughy than crunchy due to the way it's cooked. "Our philosophy [is to bring the] Italian experience to the American palate," says Amodt. "[Pizzas are] cooked in the oven set at 900 degrees for 90 seconds. So we are a VPN certified, which means that we are following the strict standards of the VPN."

VPN stands for Vera Pizza Napoletana (which translates to Traditional Naples Pizza), and is a certification that the pizza has met a set of standards. "We went through a long process to get the restaurant certified, showing them that we are using the right ingredients. So we have a good amount of our ingredients – [such as] the flour, the tomatoes, the oil, the Buffalo Mozzarella – imported from Italy," says Amodt.

The other piece to a VPN certification is the process by which the dough is made. "We have our certification hanging in the restaurant, we have the VPN insignia on our menu and that's something to really be proud of and something that we like to showcase,"

FOOD

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Amodt explains.

The strict set of standards and authentic way that these pizzas are made can be tasted with each bite. It also makes the pizzas at Angelina's quite unique and different from most pizza you can get elsewhere. The Vegetariana, for example, is a white pizza where the dough and cheese melt in your mouth. Complete with roasted bell peppers, eggplant, onion, mushrooms and basil, it's the Buffalo Mozzarella cooked Neapolitana-style combined with the soft crust that really makes this pizza stand out.

Similarly, the Diavola is a red-sauced pizza made with San Marzano DOP pomodoro sauce (DOP stands for Denominazione d' Origine Protetta, or protected designation of origin). The pizza also features Neapolitana-style salame (both mild and spicy are available, although the spicy one isn't too zesty). Once again, the authenticity of the sauce and salame really gives the pizza a unique, delicious taste that you can't get at just any pizzeria. "You can eat a whole pizza and not feel very heavy because of the process and the fermentation of the dough," says Amodt. That's definitely the case.

However, it's not only the pizzas that make Angelina's a great dining

destination. "We're trying to redefine what a pizzeria is [by] not just serving pizza," says Amodt. "We do have several pizzas on the menu, but we're [also] doing handmade pasta and we've got chicken and steak or this beautiful whole butterflied Branzino that's on the menu." Speaking of that Branzino (aka striped bass), words can't properly describe how tasty it is. It manages to have a crunchy exterior and a soft, delicate interior at the same time, which is perhaps because it's cooked in the Stefano Ferrara oven. It's perfectly salted and doesn't have that fishy aftertaste that seafood can sometimes have. It is hands down one of the most delicious pieces of fish I've ever tasted.

It's also worth noting that all of this food paired very well with the alcohol available, whether that be an Italian wine from their vast collection or a signature cocktail. "I think our entire wine list is something to be proud of. It's all Italian wines," says Amodt. "[In terms of cocktails], we have infusers which are those porthole cocktails that we make daily. They're showcased on the bar, [brought] to the table [and poured] tableside for you, which we really enjoy. We do four different selections of that."

So what's next for Angelina's? First and foremost, they're rolling out their winter



PHOTO BY: ANNE WATSON

STRIPED BASS BRANZINO

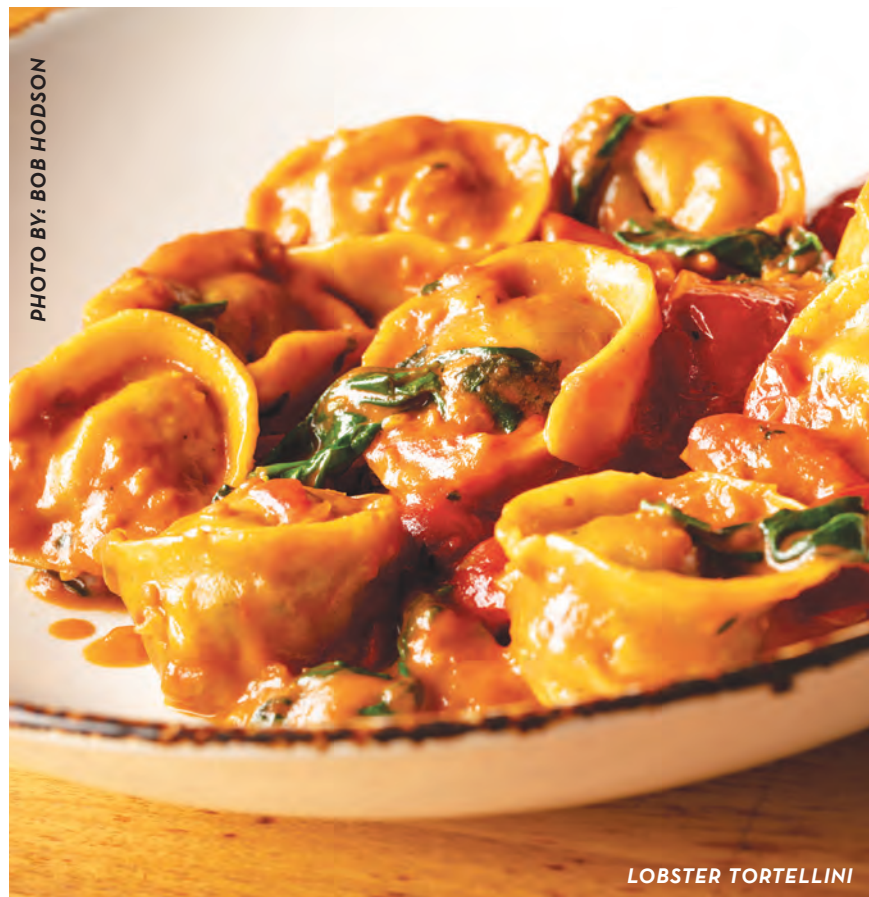


PHOTO BY: BOB HODSON

LOBSTER TORTELLINI

menu (they usually change their menu about two times a year). New selections include a tasty lobster tortellini dish and a gnocchi Bolognese with burrata. They are also currently working on their outside covered patio which should open this month and will add more than 40 seats to the restaurant. Also, they're going all out for their New Year's Eve party, called NYE 2019 Funky Town Disco Party. "We've got a DJ [and a] champagne toast. We're going to do a four or five course prix-fixe menu," says Amodt. "We're throwing out all the stops, balloon drop and everything. We really want to push and get as many people in here as possible to bring in the new year with us at Angelina's."

In January, Angelina's will also be participating in the Anaheim Ducks' DucksNPucks event. Finally, mid-2019 Angelina's will be opening Bottega Angelina where the old Savannah Chophouse was in Laguna Niguel.

Until then, Italian food lovers can enjoy Angelina's unique, authentic Neapolitana food at its Irvine location. "If you want the best pizza outside of Naples and an atmosphere to boot, come and see us," says Amodt. "Really the way that I would describe Angelina's Pizzeria is authentic, fresh and delicious." We couldn't agree more.

Angelina's: 8573 Irvine Center Drive, Irvine, CA 92618, <https://angelinaspizzeria.com>



SHARK TANK TAKES A BITE OUT OF IRVINE!

IRVINE WEEKLY CATCHES UP WITH THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ENTREPRENEURS WHO APPEARED ON THE SHOW - WHERE ARE THEY NOW AND WHAT LIFE LESSONS HAVE BEEN LEARNED THROUGH THE EXPERIENCE.

BY: SUSAN HORNIK

PHOTOS COURTESY: SONY PICTURES TELEVISION

Southern California is a bustling area for entrepreneurs. It's no wonder then, how so many Orange County businesses make it onto the highly successful ABC series, "Shark Tank," which is currently in its 10th season.

Finding the right pitch, having all the financials in place, showing charisma and confidence – these are just some of the factors that will cause one or more of the Sharks to "bite", or invest in the contestant's idea.

In some instances, things like showing the ability to work tirelessly for their company and having a compelling backstory helps drawn in the Sharks as well.

"I think Shark Tank attracts entrepreneurs from Orange County because that area is becoming known for several start-ups," said casting supervisor, Mindy Zemrak.

"With the rise of Silicon Beach spreading amongst West Los Angeles, it's only natural that start-ups and entrepreneurs are starting to pop up in Irvine and Orange County. Irvine has become a hotspot for tech start-ups and I have no doubt that we will continue to see more companies come from O.C. on the show."

Irvine Weekly's Susan Hornik checked in with several O.C. companies to see how they are doing since their "Shark Tank" episode aired.

The Bouquet Bar, Irvine

www.bouquetbar.com

Description: Launched in January 2017, The Bouquet Bar is an upscale, customized gifting experience company. On the website, you can choose one of their attractive boxes, adding in chocolates, flowers, candies or teas.

The Deal: Mark Cuban offered \$150,000 for 20 percent of the company.

Latest News: The business has been doing really well since Bouquet Bar's launch, said Sal Aziz, chief marketing officer and co-founder. "We have grown 10x every year and are continuing on that path. Plus, we have expanded our product offerings to over 47 gifting items and introduced our two-piece box called the Shot Box."

Life lesson learned from being on "Shark Tank": "Make sure you are ready for anything. Everything from media outlets to overwhelming fan support and orders. Luckily we have an amazing team and were prepared for the orders, but we were a little overwhelmed with the amazing fan support in the form of calls and emails."

Working with their Shark: "Mark Cuban is an amazing person! Very direct and honest. We love working with him and his team because they have helped us

open so many doors and have really assisted us in our growth process and future planning."

Guardian Bikes, Irvine

<https://guardianbikes.com>

Description: A kids bike brand equipped with Guardian Bikes' patented SureStop braking technology, which ensures a very safe ride.

The Deal: Mark Cuban gave co-founders Kyle Jansen and Brian Riley \$500,000 for 15 percent of the business.

Latest News: Since the show, Jansen and Riley stopped licensing the SureStop technology and put their focus on making safer children's bikes using their technology. "Before the deal with Cuban, the company was making \$300,000 in sales per year and now we are on track to hit \$2 million in revenue," said Riley.

All of their sales are through eCommerce, which they believe is a better experience for families. "In August, with Cuban's help, we launched a partnership with Amazon to make Guardian Bikes the destination for safer bikes," Riley said.

What was it like being on the show?

"It was everything you could imagine – exciting, scary, thrilling, funny, but mostly it was intense. When you have five Sharks with strong personalities and 8 million people watching you pitch them, it's not your typical investment pitch," Riley said.

"The amount of great questions they asked and how fast they dissected our business was also impressive, since they don't know anything about you before you walk in. It was definitely an amazing experience that we will never forget."

Life Lesson Learned: "That investors can have completely different viewpoints on the best business model for a company. When Kevin O'Leary offered us a deal, he wanted us to completely stop selling Guardian Bikes and focus all of our attention on licensing our SureStop technology," remembered Riley.

"At one point, he even said he wanted to 'take Guardian out back and shoot it.' On the other hand, Mark Cuban completely saw our vision with Guardian Bikes, because as a parent with young kids, he understood how much parents care about keeping their kids safe. It was hilarious watching them fight back and forth with each other. In the end, we got Mark Cuban as a partner, who was the Shark we wanted all along."

Working with their Shark: "The question everyone wants to know! In your mind, you think someone like him wouldn't have enough time for someone like me, but you can tell that he actually cares about the companies he's working with," added Jansen.

"One of the things we appreciate most about that is that he cares about learning and being involved," Jansen noted. "He sees so many similar situations that can be applicable to a whole other company."

"I remember one time Brian emailed him a question after midnight, Mark responded in two minutes, then asked a follow-up question at 6:30 in the morning. Either he didn't sleep, or he was dreaming about Guardian Bikes!"

Shark Wheel, Lake Forest

<https://sharkwheel.com>

Description: The Shark Wheel is the reinvention of a skateboard wheel, which offers a faster ride and better traction on all kinds of terrain.

The Deal: Kevin O'Leary, Mark Cuban and guest Shark Nick Woodman of GoPro invested \$225,000 for 7.5 percent equity (with a 10 percent royalty until the Sharks get their money back).

Latest News: Shark Wheel is working with multiple industry leaders in a variety of industrial markets. "The company is exploding," enthused David Patrick, chief technology officer, who was awarded "Innovator of the Year" by the Orange County Business Journal.

"We are releasing products in the luggage space with partners like Harley Davidson. We also have incredible agriculture wheels that are over four feet in diameter, which won us a National Science Foundation grant for \$225,000 and are up for a phase two amount of \$750,000."

Also, an industry leader in the multi-billion dollar materials handling world is releasing Shark Wheels on their products, Patrick said, "for which we expect to dominate the marketplace."

What was it like being on the show?

"This was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that put us through every conceivable emotion," said Zack Fleishman, COO and co-founder. "It was a whirlwind experience that continued long after we aired."

Life Lesson Learned: "I learned that over-preparation before filming is critical to performing well in front of the Sharks," acknowledged Fleishman. "It's also critical to performing well when your episode airs and the business begins rolling in."

Added Patrick: "I didn't know if I had it in me to go in front of millions of people with an idea for a square wheel and risk being ridiculed. I was amazed how easily I handled it and have become a much more confident public speaker because of it."

Working with their Sharks: "The Sharks were amazing from the first day we met them while filming," according to Fleishman and Patrick. "Just from appearing on the show, we have been overwhelmed by the amount of industries we are being

asked to enter into."

Locker Board, San Clemente

<https://www.lockerboard.net>

Description: At the age of 11, Carson Kropfl created the only non-folding, sustainable skateboard on the market that can fit inside a backpack.

The Deal: Guest Shark Sir Richard Branson invested \$65,000 for a 20 percent stake in Kropfl's business.

Latest News: Locker Board has grown over 300 percent since being on "Shark Tank," said an excited Kropfl, now 13 years old. "We are in several retailers and just launched a store on Amazon that is doing really well."

Richard Branson's investment allowed Kropfl to hire one of the best skateboard manufacturers in the world, PS Stix, to make his sustainable line of skateboards.

"I'm collaborating with the lead of sustainable innovation at Nike, Noah Murphy-Reinhertz, on new ideas, and recently did my first TEDx Talk," said Kropfl. "It's been an incredible year and I can't wait to see what happens in 2019."

What was it like being on the show?

"Being on 'Shark Tank' is something I will never forget," said Kropfl. "Preparing to be on the show made me a better business person. I had to think through things I never had before. I couldn't believe it when I was selected for my Locker Board skateboards out of 40,000 people to be on the show. I felt lucky, grateful and nervous all at the same time."

Life Lesson Learned: "I learned to seize the moment, never give up and believe in myself," Kropfl told us. "People don't realize it took me four years to get on the show. I bumped into one of the executive producers in an elevator when I was on a family vacation and gave him an elevator pitch when I was seven years old!"

He added: "[The producer] told me I wasn't ready for the show and I kept in touch with him for four years. If I hadn't seized the moment and given him that pitch, I wouldn't be here today. You have to believe in yourself and your ideas to have success."

Working with his Shark: For the pint-sized entrepreneur, Branson is an amazing partner and mentor.

"He's taught me how to delegate and has given me several opportunities to write blogs about my experiences that have appeared on Virgin.com," Kropfl shared. "He's assigned a team of people at the Virgin Group to help me with my business. He invites me to events, too. I recently saw him receive his star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame."

"I have so much respect for him because he's a family man and gives back. We

both love the ocean. I've become an ocean activist and donate a portion of proceeds from Locker Board to Ocean Unite to help with ocean conservation. I want to be just like him when I grow up!"

Shed Defender, Irvine

<https://sheddefender.com>

Description: A lightweight onesie for dogs that controls and contains pet hair and dander. It also helps with skin conditions, allergies or anxiety issues.

The Deal: \$250,000 in exchange for 25 percent of the company. [Deal did not close]

Latest News: Shed Defender has been growing rapidly, enjoying a large and steady sales spike since their episode aired in October, according to Tyson Waltes, CEO and founder.

"We are on track to reach 60 percent year-over-year growth from 2017 to 2018 and have sold nearly 38,000 units to date. In 2019, we're expanding our product line with two new versions of our core product and have a few other exciting updates in the works."

What was it like being on the show?

"'Shark Tank' was an amazing, difficult and terrifying experience all at the same time. From the application process to the filming, there's a lot more to it than what you see on television," explained Waltes, who's team spent hours preparing for their time in the Tank.

"I think it paid off, because we were confident when we walked in that we would have the answers to the questions thrown at us. Once we got to the filming portion though, it finally began to really sink in: This is happening... I am finally going on the show of my dreams with the company I started.

"I had never been so nervous in my life, but I had my brother and my dog by my side, so I shook it off and went for it. It's something we will never forget and always be thankful for."

Life Lesson Learned: "Preparing for 'Shark Tank' was a great exercise for us as a company," said Waltes. "It forced us to do a deep dive into our numbers and look at the business through an investor's lens, which is something we hadn't really done before."

It also forced Waltes to work on his presentation skills and learn how to be more clear and concise when talking about his business. "On a different note, I learned that there's so much more that goes into filming a TV show than I would have ever thought, which makes it even more nerve-wracking when you finally walk into the Tank."

Working with their Shark: "The deal with Lori Greiner fell through on the back

end, so we're no longer working with her, but we think it's the best outcome for both parties. We spoke to Lori several times, though, and she was great to work with and we plan to keep in touch!"

Slyde Handboards, San Clemente

<https://www.slydehandboards.com>

Description: Handboards for bodysurfing.

The Deal: Mark Cuban and guest Shark Ashton Kutcher split a \$200,000 investment for a 22 percent stake in the company.

Latest News: Slyde Handboards just had their Shark Tank update that aired and business is booming, said Angela Watts, chief ryde officer. "We have sold over \$1.6 million in product, have launched into Dick's Sporting Goods, and have a global community of ambassadors and team riders. We sponsor handboarding competitions around the world, but our favorite is our Slyde Charity Handboard Competition that happens in our hometown, San Clemente, every June."

What was it like being on the show?

"Being on 'Shark Tank' is the most incredible and whirlwind experience in the world for any entrepreneur," Watts told us. "It is the biggest opportunity for any company to get, so of course it is a bit nerve wracking while you are preparing to pitch to the Sharks.

"We prepared like we would prepare for an exam - flash cards and all! Steve and I were both so nervous, but knew we did the best we could. Once we gave our initial pitch, we could tell we had them interested, because everyone had a huge smile on their face - even Mr. Wonderful.

Watts and her husband knew they wanted Cuban and Kutcher as partners. "But when both Kevin and Robert offered us the money for only 15 percent of our company and Mark and Ashton wanted 25 percent - it was a really hard decision to make. But in the end, giving up an extra 7 per cent for Mark and Ashton was so worth it!"

Life Lesson Learned: "We learned to never give up on something you are passionate about. My husband Steve and I applied to be on 'Shark Tank' three times before being accepted. We got turned down by banks and investment groups, racked up credit card debt and thousands of dollars from family."

"We had some really hard financial times, but after being on 'Shark Tank' we learned that we just needed to keep going until we found the right partners that believed in our company and us."

Working with the Sharks: "Talk about two powerhouses! These two guys are the most awesome and supportive investors a

company could ask for. The money they put into the business was great, but having those two on our team has propelled Slyde in ways that would not have happened with just any investor."

Watts was happy to see Kutcher and Cuban give their time and resources for the company. "But they also care about our well-being as well. I remember when I was talking to Mark a week before I was due to have our daughter, he said, 'Don't worry about the business, it will still be here. Just enjoy the time with your family and take care of yourself.'"

"That really meant a lot to me and shows you what type of person and investor he is."

Nui Foods, Irvine

<https://eatnui.com>

Description: A company specializing in low carb, low sugar cookies.

The Deal: Guest judge Alex Rodriguez offered \$300,000 for a 25 percent stake in the business.

Latest News: Business has been growing fast since Nui appeared on the show, said Victor Macias, co-founder. "We hit an all-time sales goal during the first 24 hours after airing. It's amazing what happens after you've been on the show. We've seen opportunities open up that were not available before the episode broadcast. Our goal is to keep the momentum going for as long as possible."

What was it like being on the show? "It was an amazing experience, like taking our biggest hopes, dreams and fears and rolling them all into one. We knew this would be a once in a lifetime opportunity and we wanted to maximize it. That's why we practiced a lot before the show. My partner and I would drink shots of espresso and do sprints around the office to raise our heart rate. The goal was to practice while feeling anxious. We did not want to leave any room for error!"

Life Lesson Learned: "We learned the value of going for the 'home run.' It's actually how we've grown Nui so fast. We plan for the long-term but still swing for the fences when opportunities arise."

Working with your Shark: "While we can't disclose many details, getting Alex to make a deal was a dream come true. We resonated with Alex's immigrant backstory. He knows what it's like to create something from nothing. We understand that it takes hard work and vision to accomplish something great. We feel that Alex is the perfect example of those values."

"Shark Tank" is currently airing its 10th season on ABC.

ENTERTAINMENT



IT IS BEGINNING TO LOOK A LOT LIKE CHRISTMAS!

WINTER FEST BRINGS BEVY OF HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES TO O.C.

BY: SCOTT FEINBLATT

PHOTOS COURTESY OF: WINTER FEST O.C.

There aren't too many places in SoCal where families can experience a proverbial winter wonderland. To varying extents, The Grove, in Los Angeles, is one; the Queen Mary, in Long Beach, is another; and the Irvine Spectrum is yet another. That said, this year's most extensive facsimile for experiencing the joys of winter, and its accompanying holiday spirit, has got to be Winter Fest, at the O.C. Fairgrounds. Entering the

fourth year of its existence, Winter Fest has established a significant reputation for its numerous entertaining aspects, and it appears that it's on course to provide yet another year of G-rated, holiday-themed bacchanalia.

The event's various ticketing tiers generally range from \$6 to \$75. For the best deals, purchase your tickets in groups of 10 or more (online purchases are also less than onsite purchases). All tickets include access to most of Winter Fest's attractions; premium tickets grant access to additional attractions, which are also available to other guests for additional fees.

For the price of admission, guests will get to experience unlimited ice tubing down Snowflake Summit, a 150-foot, eight-lane slide; the Fast Pass for this costs \$10 extra. Guests will get to play in real snow, freshly-blown each day at Alpine Village; this area features inflatables, food trucks, a toddler play area and the Festival of Lights, which is a light tunnel featuring 2 million lights and a variety of holiday vignettes. Other decorative attractions of note include: The world's largest rocking horse and the world's largest orna-



ment. For the kiddies, there will also be holiday-themed bounce houses and character meet-and-greets from cartoon shows like "Thomas the Tank Engine," "Sid the Science Kid," "PJ Masks," and Buddy from "Dinosaur Train."

Additional attractions on the docket for all ticket holders include Santa's Petting Zoo, Santa's Workshop – for crafts and games – a snowboard simulator, and a variety of live entertainment. The live performers include bands and strolling carolers. Ticket holders on Dec. 31 will also be able to join in the New Year's Eve countdown, featuring fireworks and the dropping of 3,000 balloons – which will happen at 6:00 p.m. for the early crowds and at midnight for those who wish to ring in the New Year at Winter Fest. Each night will also feature a holiday parade at 5:30 p.m..

Next, what winter wonderland would be complete without trains? Winter Fest has got trains big and small. For the small, there will be an expansive model train exhibit from the Del Oro Pacific Train Club; for the large, there will be two trackless trains, making their way through the fairgrounds for guests

who'd like to take a load off and enjoy a ride. Finally, all ticketed guests will have an opportunity to experience a nightly tree lighting ceremony while Santa and his reindeer fly overhead.

Attractions requiring extra fees include the Candy Cane Carnival, which features games and rides, such as a holiday ferris wheel. There will also be a rink for ice skating available, and, of course, an opportunity to have pictures taken with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Rounding out the theme, there will be over a dozen shops, featuring a Dickensian theme, where guests can buy traditional English foods and other unique items, as well as take tea and eat scones at Cuthbert's Tea Shoppe.

If there's anything Christmas-themed that Winter Fest has left out, we can't think of what it could be. So, if you're in need of a holiday bonanza, then you've got one waiting for you at the O.C. Fairgrounds between Dec. 20 and Jan. 6. Happy Holidays!

Winter Fest will be at O.C. Fairgrounds, 88 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa, from Dec. 20 - Jan. 6. For more information, visit <https://winterfestoc.com/>

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IRVINE'S OWN SHELBY AND SANDY ARE MAKING A BIG SPLASH IN L.A.

THE FUN-LOVING DUO ARE BEING HAILED AS THE NEW ART STARS OF LOS ANGELES

BY: EVAN SENN

PHOTOS COURTESY: SHELBY AND SANDY

Walking into the studio of Irvine-born, L.A.-based artist duo (and brothers) Shelby and Sandy, you are immediately transported to another world; a world of possibilities, creativity and fun. The space vibrates with creative energy and seems to exist in a place that is in between eras of art history, bringing all moments in time together simultaneously, and between levels of our human imagination, straddling the boundaries of serious work and playful experimentation.

This studio space is truly representative of the artists – Shelby and Sandy

Murphy are two of four brothers all raised in Irvine, and have been making collaborative-based artworks together for about five years. They are funny, charming, imaginative and hard-working individuals. Their work is classic while simultaneously innovative. Their story is simple, and although their career is only beginning, it is easy to tell that these artists are in for the long haul and we've only just begun to see their creativity in action.

This artistic duo creates work in a variety of mediums and styles, all with a playful and nostalgic energy. Their visual aesthetic can be summarized

as contemporary pop art, but is more complicated than that – their work blends the aesthetics of pop art with classic animation and finish fetish, but uses elements of fan art, minimalism, surrealism and lowbrow to create their specific brand of bright, fun and highly sought-after artwork. They make a lot of custom commission work, but often pay homage to popular cartoon characters, movie scenes, nostalgic childhood paraphernalia and straightforward color-play.

When they first began collaborating seriously, around 2013, Shelby and Sandy's artwork was initially coveted

by a handful of celebrities, international businessmen and a select few in-the-know collectors. With just a few pieces of their own designs broadcast on Instagram for the whole world to see, they began getting commissions in their style of painting, which led to some more, which led to more. While Instagram was really gaining momentum in the social sphere, Shelby and Sandy were building their brand and clientele simultaneously, all with Instagram's help.

Five years later, Shelby and Sandy are creating artworks for Zac Efron, Nick Cannon, Bradley Cooper, Lucy Hale,

Edgar Ramirez, Westfield Century City, Children's Hospital of Orange County and label artwork for Color Wine. They also are working on a number of clothing items, furniture designs and towels (which can currently be found in the MOCA L.A. gift shop). Their signature style – whether on canvas, board, car, towel or clothing – is a mix of replicating 1990s classic cartoon animation stills with a unique painterly spin, add a hint of humor, a splash of nostalgia, and a dash of high finish, you've got an iconic Shelby and Sandy art piece.

Working seven days a week in their

studio bathroom is covered in the perfectly fluffy cumulus clouds as well. The kitchen they've built out in this space is like if Rene Magritte, Andy Warhol, Marge Simpson and Baddie Winkle had an orgy baby and the baby happen to be a kitchen – this would be that baby – bright, fun and surreal. They also have a play/hang zone full of vintage arcade games, colorful collectibles and even a claw machine with beanie babies inside.

The entire space is perfect for dreaming – stark white walls and ceilings in the majority of the workspace are

Sandy told us in an interview that they were never bored, and always found projects, art, experiments or games to engage their creativity if they didn't have anything else to do. Whether they were climbing trees, teaching voodoo in the cul-de-sac of their childhood house, playing dress-up with mom, painting or drawing in chalk, the boys in the Murphy household were cultivated with creativity; thanks to their art-loving colorful mom, Diana.

Huge fans of Irvine, Shelby and Sandy visit their childhood home often and are very close with their brothers,

emboldened them to be courageous and unabashed artists today. Many kids grow up without a spark of creative encouragement from their parents or don't feel confident enough playing in creative moments.

If the art scene in Southern California was a bit bigger they would still live in Irvine, but because of the vast warehouses available right in the middle of the downtown art scene in Los Angeles, along with the scale of their more recent projects and the materials involved, having an L.A. studio just makes more sense for them. Although their studio is



studio and often sleeping there three-to-four nights a week, it's no surprise that these hard-working dudes made their studio comfortable, creative and fun. When we got the opportunity to visit, we were escorted throughout the space by a tiny gray fluffball/teacup poodle named Spooky that made sure we were being licked at all times and familiar with all the games and toys in the warehouse. While the work space of this warehouse is epicly large and perfect for a project of any size, Shelby and Sandy also created a loft-office, fully loaded with artificial turf for carpet and walls covered in their signature happy clouds. Every surface in the

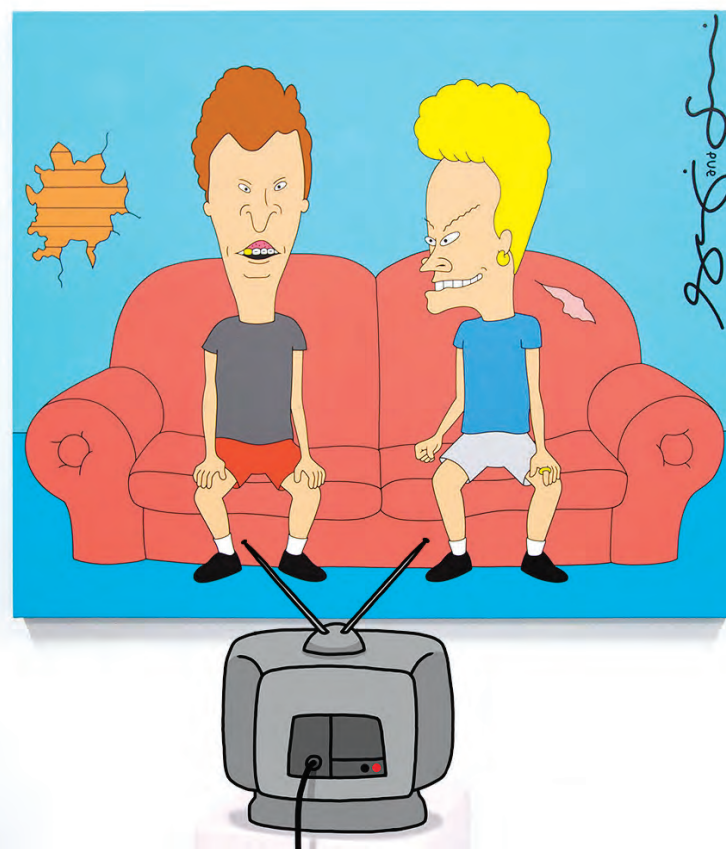
conducive to any creative thinking, art-making or Instagram photo taking, but the details are imaginative and playful as well. All of what this duo creates is inspired by the lives they've lived and the world they grew up in – skateboarding, playing outside, watching Disney and Warner Brothers cartoons, and making arts and crafts with their family in Irvine.

Shelby and Sandy grew up in Irvine with their other brothers in a classic suburban family environment. Growing up in bunk beds in the same room for most of their adolescence, they had a lot of time for activities and were encouraged to create when given any opportunity,

mother and father. In the 1990s and early 2000s, Irvine may have been a quiet and quaint place, but it was also a blank canvas for imaginative youth, providing a great neutral space for dreamers to dream and for kids to be kids, without the dangers of a more urban environment. Shelby and Sandy both admitted that they have always been making art – it was a part of growing up in their household. Shelby said that they still get craft and art supplies for Christmas every year. It's a tradition at this point, and they love that. Although it seems commonplace, it was the small acts of encouragement like those art supply presents that

in downtown L.A., they now live in the South Bay, making their regular trips home to mom and dad's a bit easier.

Although Shelby and Sandy have only been making art professionally for about five years, their portfolio of work is prolific and inspiring. They work hard, create what they want, and try to be nice to everyone. Their artwork engages all types of people, explores the power of images, and activates nostalgia, whimsy and creativity in their viewers. As their studio walls loudly whisper, "shelby and sandy are nice." It is clear that for these nice guys, this is just the beginning.





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