

UCI INSTITUTE AND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA ART • IRVINE COVID-19 UPDATE • STRETCHLAB OPENING IN IRVINE

# IRVINE WEEKLY

JULY 22, 2020 • VOL. 2, NO. 19



## IRVINE RESTAURANTS: THE BATTLE TO STAY AFLOAT



# IRVINE WEEKLY CLASSIFIEDS

## EMPLOYMENT



### ACUPUNCTURIST (IRVINE, CA)

Meet with patients to obtain information about their complaints, symptoms, medical history, diet, lifestyle & psychological health. Make diagnoses and determine treatment strategies. Perform acupressure & related techniques. 40hrs/wk. Master's degree in Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine or related, Acupuncturist license in CA required. Resume to Steve Kim Chiropractic, Inc. Attn: Steve Kim, 14210 Culver Dr #E, Irvine, CA 92604

### ENGINEERING SPECIALIST III (LONG BEACH, CA)

Manage or apply extensive tech expertise in coord of multiple, complex, non-routine projects involving planning, dsng, reconfig & alteratn of control sys. Reqs: Bach degree in Electrical Engg or rel field +12 yrs Engg exp. 5 yrs of field engg exp reqd that includes commissioning power system protection for low, medium & high voltage sys. 5 yrs exp writing complex scope of work docs including tech callouts & detailed work instruncts is reqd. This includes defining the scope of work for contractors & dsng teams by creating detailed outline or work instruncts w/ tech specs. 5 yrs exp performing power sys analysis using ETAP, SKM or EASYPOWER softwr & writing tech docs w/ proposed solutions for area of concern & power sys enhancement. 5 yrs exp reqd performing complex quality checks on dsng packages. 5 yrs exp conducting power sys anlyss using ETAP, SKM, or Easypower. Proven sales & marketing abilities by bringing in min of \$500,000 worth of business to an org. Will also accept Master's +7 yrs exp as described above in lieu of Bach Degree +12 yrs exp. Ability to travel nationally up to 10%. Must have legal authority to work in the U.S. EEOE. Mail resume: M. Hammond, Mangan Inc, 3901 Via Oro Ave, Long Beach, CA 90810.

### HEAD OF PROJECT DEVELOPMENT:

F/T; Solar energy company; Plan, direct, and/or coordinate the operations of Project Development Dept. in the Company; Req. Bachelor's degree in any major plus 5 yrs of exp. in the job offered or related; Mail resume to: HANWHA Q CELLS USA CORP., 300 Spectrum Center Drive, Suite 1250, Irvine, CA 92618

### HUMAN RESOURCE SPECIALIST (LOS ANGELES, CA)

Hire employees and process hiring-related paperwork. Prepare/maintain employment records related to events, such as hiring, termination, leaves, transfers, or promotions. Address employee relations issues, such as harassment allegations, work complaints, or other employee concerns. 40hrs/wk, Bachelor's degree in Management/Psychology or related required. Resume to Ultimate Telecom, Inc. Attn: Seok Choi, 450 S Western Ave #207, Los Angeles, CA 90020

### MKT. RES. ANALYST-SBDC INTEL TEAM (SANTA ANA, CA):

Conduct & org. mkt. res. for SBDC Intel Team; create proc., plans & sys. to improve team ops & svcs. Req: Master's in Mktg/Bus/Related Mktg/Data Anal. field + 6 mos exp. Mail Resume: The Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Orange County, Job #MRA01; 1 Banting, Ste. A, Irvine, CA 92618

### MONTESSORI HEAD TEACHER:

Run a Montessori classroom & teach preschoolers; 40hrs/wk; Send resume to Spring Education, Inc. Attn: HR, 1 Technology Dr., Bldg H, Irvine, CA 92618

### MONTESSORI HEAD TEACHER:

Teach kindergarteners using Montessori methods; 40hrs/wk; Send resume to Spring Education, Inc. Attn: HR, 1 Technology Dr., Bldg H, Irvine, CA 92618

### PASTORAL COUNSELOR:

Master's Degree in Divinity req., \$34,000/yr. F/T. Resume to Hyuk Been Kwon, Seed Church, 1130 Soto Pl, Placentia, CA 92870

### SALES AGENT (IRVINE, CA)

Sell various conventional/government insured loans. Highschool diploma req'd. Resume to: Home Approvals Direct Inc. 18201 Von Karman Ave #300, Irvine, CA 92612

### SENIOR FOREIGN LEGAL ANALYST

White & Case LLP in Los Angeles, CA seeks a Senior Foreign Legal Analyst w/ Master's deg or frgn equiv deg in Law w/admission to Brazilian Bar & 6 yrs of exp at an int'l law firm managing high volume of Brazilian & Latin American litigations. Fluency in Portuguese language for legal purposes. Send resumes to laterale-cruiting@whitecase.com w/ref MH:CB.

### SR. ACCOUNTANT

sought by Laboratory for Advanced Medicine, Inc in Irvine, CA to prepare and analyze financial statements. Resume to: HR, Laboratory for Advanced Medicine, Inc, 9950 Research Dr., Irvine, CA 92618.

### SR. DEVELOPMENT ENGINEER (IRVINE, CA).

Execute vehicle-MI design validatn (DVP) testg for Rivian's electric vehicles. Domestic trvl reqd approx 50% of the time. Must possess a Master's degree or foreign equiv in Mechncal Engng or a closely reltd field & 2 yrs of (or a Bachelor's degree or foreign equiv in Mechanical Engng or a closely reltd field & 5 yrs of progressvly resp) calibratn dvlpmnt exp. Exp must incl durability testg, dyno testg & real world testg in diff climatic & altitude locatns, supervsg vehicle intrgrtn & prototype blds & debugging sftwr & hrdwr components, as well as the followg skills/tools/technologies: Vector CAN tools, ETAS INCA or any other CCP Data acqisitin platform, MATLAB/Simulink proficiency for analysis & post processg, CATIA& ENOVIA PLM, &MS Project & ste. Email res to Rivian Automotive, LLC, Attn: Mobility, Job Ref #: SDE20, hrmobility@rivian.com

### STRATEGY MARKET BUSINESS ANALYST:

Master's Degree in Business Administration, req., \$56,056/yr. F/T. Resume to Jake Oh, Linkone, Inc., 5681 Beach Blvd, Suite 100, Buena Park, CA 90621

### TAEKWONDO INSTRUCTOR

(Irvine, CA) Conduct and teach taekwondo techniques. Minimum 4th degree Dan certificate req'd. Resume to: Tallum Group Inc, 3580 Barranca Pkwy #C, Irvine, CA 92606

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JULY 22, 2020 NO. 19

# CONTENTS



BOWERS MUSEUM

6

## ART...3

The history and future of the UCI Institute and Museum of California Art. BY LIZ GOLDNER

## FOOD...6

Irvine restaurant owners hopeful despite uncertainties. BY TARA FINLEY

## NEWS...8

Irvine COVID-19 cases more than double in one month. BY EVAN J. LANCASTER

## BUSINESS...9

Premier assisted stretching boutique opening its doors. BY TARA FINLEY

## ENTERTAINMENT...10

Movie Guide: The Surrogate, Babyteeth, The Truth and more. BY CHUCK WILSON

## FILM...11

Review: Palm Springs BY ASHER LUBERTO

COVER AND TOC: EVERYDAY EATERY



CARLOS ALMARAZ, "SUBURBAN NIGHTMARE" 1983 - THE BUCK COLLECTION

## A COMMUNITY OF ART

### LOOKING FORWARD AND BACK AT UCI INSTITUTE AND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA ART.

BY: LIZ GOLDNER

I met Gerald Buck in 2012 at a Laguna Art Museum panel discussion for its exhibition, "Best Kept Secret: UCI and the Development of Contemporary Art in Southern California." The display – part of the Getty Foundation's Pacific Standard Time (PST) art initiative – elucidated the early days of UC Irvine's Art Department. Buck, a longtime collector of 20th-century California art, mentioned that he had

attended dozens of PST exhibitions in the previous six months, enjoying them all thoroughly.

In 2013, Buck and his wife Bente passed away. In 2014, their family donated their entire 3,200 art piece collection to UC Irvine. Among the 700-plus artists represented in the collection are Peter Alexander, Carlos Almaraz, Larry Bell, Richard Diebenkorn, Viola Frey, George Hermes, Ed Kienholz, Gilbert

Luhan, David Park, Ed Ruscha, Wayne Thiebaud, James Turrell, DeWain Valentine and Peter Voukos. Art movements include Assemblage, Bay Area Figurative, California Funk, Chicano art, Hard-edge painting and Light and Space.

Soon after, the nearby Irvine Museum announced that its 1,300-piece collection of 19th- and 20th-century California Impressionist artworks would also be donated to the University of Cal-

ifornia, Irvine. Significant artists in that collection include Franz Bischoff, Frank Cuprien, Anna Hills, Joseph Kleitsch, Edgar Payne, Hanson Puthuff, Granville Redmond, Guy Rose, Elmer Wachtel and William Wendt.

Stephen Barker Ph.D., dean of UC Irvine's Claire Trevor School of the Arts (CTSAs) and the contact person for the Buck and Irvine Museum collections, was both stunned and delighted by these two endowments. Considering how to manage the numerous art pieces, he proposed to UCI Chancellor Howard Gillman the creation of the Institute and Museum of California Art (IMCA). The venue, combining a museum and institute, would also engage UCI graduate programs in museum studies and art conservation.

The venue's first presentation in 2017, curated by Stephen Barker, IMCA's





PETER VOULKOS, "MIMBRES", 2000 - THE BUCK COLLECTION

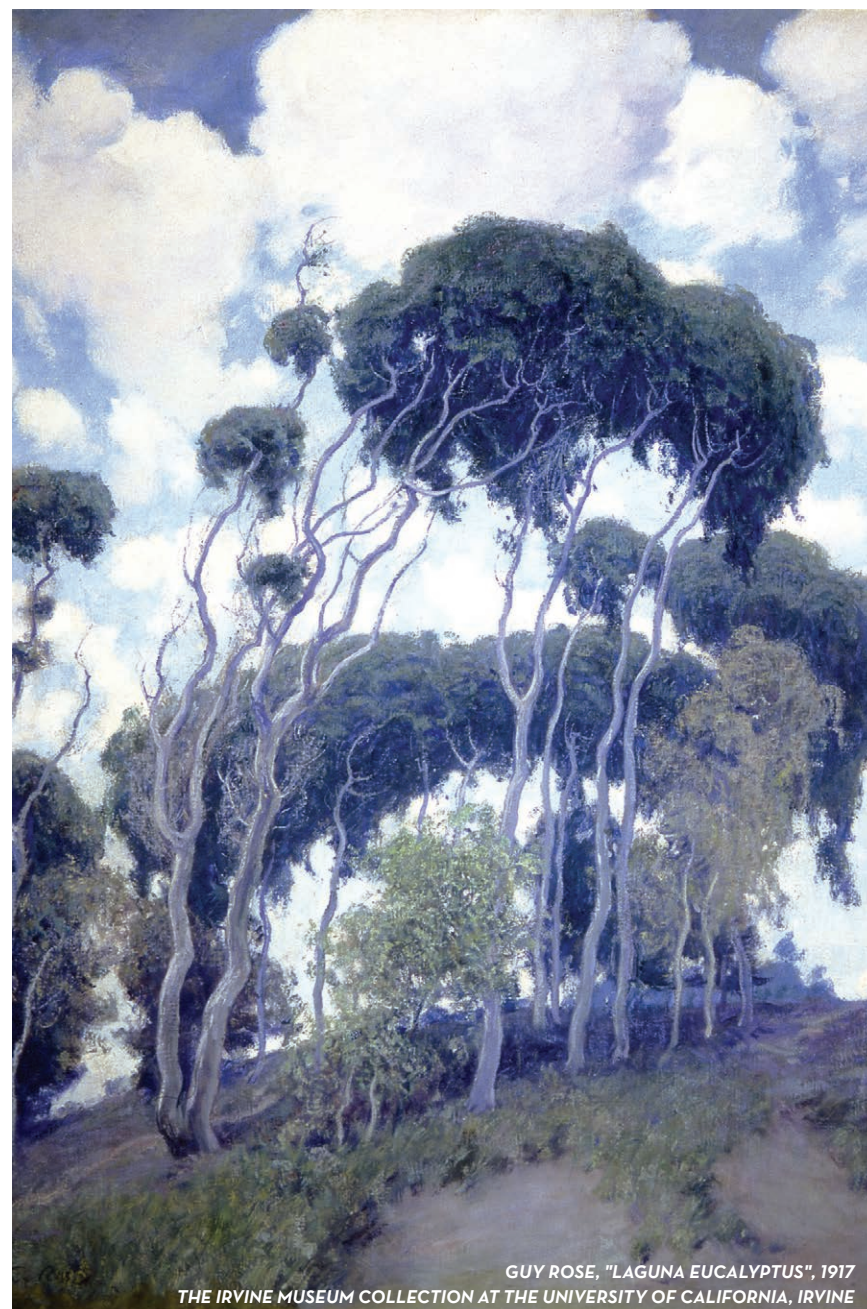
first executive director, was displayed in a 3,000-square-foot art gallery in downtown Laguna Beach. The gallery, previously owned by Buck for the display of his artwork, was, according to L.A. Times art critic Christopher Knight, "a private place for Buck to study his collection." In 2018-19, UCI mounted an exhibition of 50 Buck art pieces at its University Art Galleries. "First Glimpse," curated by Barker, by Professor and Department Chair Kevin Appel and by Professor of Art History Cécile Whiting, all at UCI, gave the public a first look at a selection of the seminal art pieces.

In August 2019, IMCA hired Kim Kanatani as Museum Director. The California native and former Guggenheim

Museum Deputy Director and Director of Education kept a low profile at first, immersing herself in IMCA's expansive collection and planning for the venue's future.

I met Kanatani in February at an art networking event and requested an interview. Soon after, with California in lockdown mode, I figured that she was taking advantage of the nationwide slowdown to formulate plans for IMCA's future. And indeed she was ... and still is. Recently, I was fortunate to interview her remotely.

Kanatani explained that the IMCA staff has completed a full physical inventory of the art collection and is developing a collection management

GUY ROSE, "LAGUNA EUCALYPTUS", 1917  
THE IRVINE MUSEUM COLLECTION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE

system and database. "We have begun a systematic process for conservation assessment and treatments, as needed," she explained, adding that they are broadening their understanding of California art and considering adding work to the collection. "An integral part of the process is to explore the manifestations, implications and applications of California art," she said. "Yet the definition of [the genre] remains open to interpretation."

IMCA also plans to launch a series of virtual meetings involving "experts" on various aspects of California art. "The participants, with a diversity of backgrounds and perspectives, will include individuals and institutions

who are not part of UCI," she said, "yet would value and use IMCA's resources and programs. The goal is to seek their input and to generate varied, inclusive, expansive investigations of this topic."

Regarding building plans for the museum to be on the UCI campus, Kanatani said, "When I arrived, I asked that the building project be temporarily paused to take time to envision our future and to develop a strategic plan articulating IMCA's aspirations. Our intent is to create an architecturally-significant building that responds to and becomes part of the IMCA collection. A key consideration is accessibility by the campus, regional community and beyond."



KIM KANATANI - PHOTO BY RALPH PALUMBO

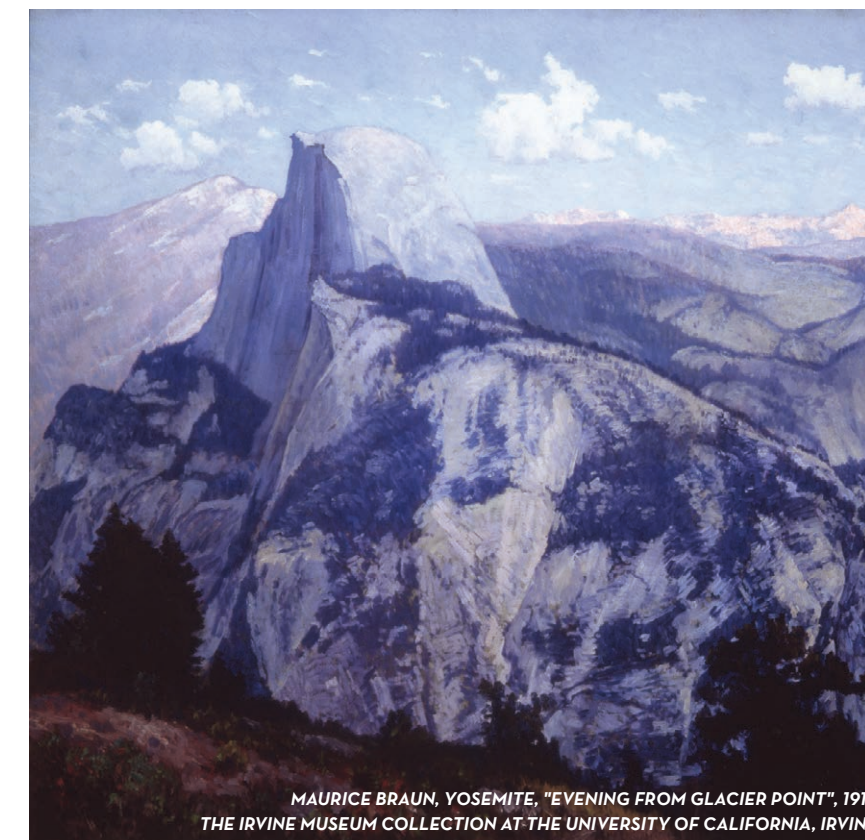
About opening an interim gallery, Kanatani responded: "We are waiting for directives from the state and from Chancellor Gillman to announce the reopening of our interim gallery [previously in the former Irvine Museum location]. We have created a preparedness plan that includes the new normal standards that many museums are instituting. We have deeply missed our visitors and look forward to sharing our exhibitions and educational programs again, hopefully soon."

As online exhibitions are now intrinsic tools of art venues, IMCA continues refining its website. "We are updating content to make it more user-friendly and easier to navigate," Kanatani said.

"We have been using our Instagram feed to highlight works in our collection, while sharing fascinating stories about the artists represented and their backgrounds."

The venue's Monthly Muse, available through email and online, is a detailed newsletter with content about IMCA's ongoing activities, along with stories about important artists, art supporters and art-related events in Southern California. Kanatani added: "We are preparing a new workshop program that integrates object-based learning with hands-on artmaking, intending to launch a digital version this fall."

As IMCA promotes dialogues on the arts, Kanatani explained, "Once social

MAURICE BRAUN, YOSEMITE, "EVENING FROM GLACIER POINT", 1918  
THE IRVINE MUSEUM COLLECTION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINEJOSEPH KLEITSCH, "RED AND GREEN", 1923  
THE IRVINE MUSEUM COLLECTION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE

normalcy is reestablished, we will host a multi-day working conference on California art to engage experts and to include public participation and programming. As we build a community of partners allied with IMCA's

mission, I envision annual or biannual convenings to help us evolve and refine our frameworks and to interpret IMCA's future initiatives in ways we cannot yet imagine."





ANGELINA'S PIZZERIA

## IRVINE'S RESTAURANTS BATTLE TO STAY AFLOAT

**DESPITE SHORTAGES AND UNCERTAINTIES, RESTAURANT OWNERS ARE HOPEFUL.**

BY: TARA FINLEY • PHOTOS: COURTESY OF FEATURED RESTAURANTS

As we continue to see an increase in COVID-19 cases, the future of Irvine's industries remains precarious. Waves of openings and closures have the community frustrated and unsure of how to proceed. The only certainty is uncertainty.

Weeks ago, *Irvine Weekly* reached out to local restaurants to find out how they're doing and how they're proceeding. With July's rolling closures, including previously reopened dine-in restaurants, we asked industry folk once again to share their experiences in trying to stay afloat during not only a pandemic, but also during the rapid politicization of public health and safety.

"Almost everyone has been pretty good about the requirements for face masks and social distance," says Brian Clark of Everyday Eatery. "We've had a few people challenge them, and some have been very vocal. The hardest part is that retail and restaurants have become the front line for some people to challenge these rules, and there is a lot of anger and frustration directed toward us and staff."

He shared with us one such angry message received through Facebook. Inexplicably, interactions like this have become commonplace for beleaguered front-line workers across the nation.

"The fact is that regardless of our beliefs around the

face mask and distancing requirements, if we don't follow them, we risk closure of our business by local authorities," continues Clark. "Health concerns aside, we're not prepared to risk our whole team's livelihood and paychecks."

By not complying with health regulations, customers risk not only the lives of staff, but their jobs as well. With the hazards of the job, how is morale?

"Our staff is great. Morale is good, despite having to work in less-than-perfect conditions such as wearing a mask and gloves, getting temperature checks and constantly sanitizing," says Sho Fusco of Angelina's Pizzeria.

"Morale has been up and down," says Clark, sharing a different perspective. "Right now, we all feel very grateful that we have steady work and customer support. As we hear of more restaurant closures, we get a little anxious, but our business has been steady and we've needed to add to our team. Our team is awesome and we have fun at work, but it's a challenge to ignore everything happening in the industry and keep a happy feeling through it all."

How are restaurants feeling about California and Orange County's mandated precautions?

"I don't really know what to think," admits Clark. "I just have to trust that they are good precautions. We don't find them too onerous. What we'd really like is for more businesses to follow them. We've seen that some businesses don't provide hand sanitizer on entry, or display the correct signage, or that their service model runs against the new requirements. I feel that business owners are their own type of leaders in the community, and it's good to be able to show that we can manage the requirements."

Fusco agrees, saying, "We have been following the rules based on the CDC guides. I don't think every restaurant is doing that and they need to."

Both Everyday Eatery and Angelina's Pizzeria have put in a lot of work to keep their operations running and safe.

"We have lost some seating and spaced out our tables more. Our landlord has promised to expand our outdoor space by removing planters and allowing more patio seating. We are waiting for that to take place so that we can recapture our full capacity," Fusco shares hopefully.

Clark feels frustrated with yo-yoing rules. "It's been a challenge shifting back and forth from dine-in to take-out, and incorporating online orders and third party delivery," he says. "We've always focused on having an excellent in-store experience and food presentation, but now takeout has become a huge part of our business. We love having great interactions and conversations with our customers, and now we have more brief encounters. It's harder to develop real relationships with our customers. Thankfully we have a lot of outdoor seating ... our dine-in service is able to keep going nicely outdoors."

Keeping a restaurant running in 2020 has proved to be a herculean task.

"Costs have ballooned across the board. We've had to remove menu items because ingredients have either become prohibitively expensive, or completely unavailable," explains Clark. "Paper goods and take-out packaging supply has changed drastically in price and availability. Right now for example, food service gloves are nearly impossible to find, and when we do they are three times the usual price. As restaurants close, our suppliers have chosen not to stock certain items as they don't sell enough to justify keeping it in supply, and so then we need to pivot to new suppliers or find a substitute. We feel pressure on our margins, but we're reluctant to raise prices as we're not sure what the customer response will be. For now, we doing our best to absorb the costs."

With less people dining out and costs rising, owners



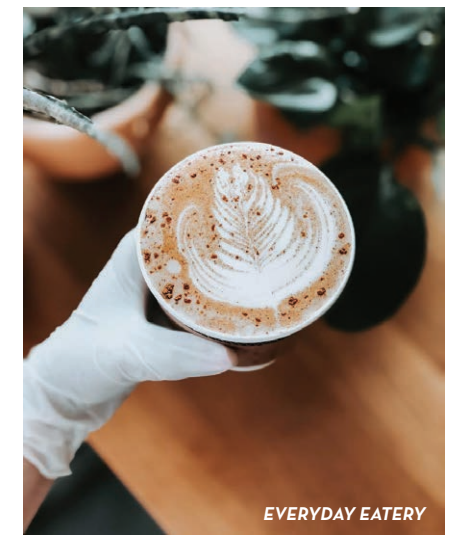
EVERYDAY EATERY



EVERYDAY EATERY



ANGELINA'S PIZZERIA



EVERYDAY EATERY

struggle to keep everyone paid, fed and happy.

"Less people are dining out," says Fusco. "We do feel like we are being watched by some customers. You know those who like to think they are critics and turn to Yelp to write their editorial."

"On a positive note, we have learned a lot about additional sanitary rules that we incorporated into our training manuals," Fusco adds.

As training manuals are written and rewritten as each mandate passes, will the restaurant industry be able to stay afloat?

"As long as everyone follows the CDC guidelines we should be OK until there is a vaccine. I envision more of the same for the next couple of months," predicts Fusco. "[We hope] to continue to stay open. We have noticed several partners have shut down. Our hearts go out to them. Shutting down with no revenue is debilitating and can ruin the business."

"Today, I feel pretty optimistic, but ask me tomorrow!" Clark laughs. "As the cases in Orange County rise, the chances of another shut-down become greater. I'm hopeful that if we survived March and April, then the next few months will be okay too."

"We hope that our staff stay healthy and that we can continue to serve great breakfast, lunch and coffee to our loyal and new customers," continues Clark.

"We hope to continue to cover our costs and payroll. We would love to be in a position to be able to keep adding to our team."

How can the community of Irvine help struggling businesses?

"Raise awareness with restaurants to take the safety precaution seriously and manage their employees more," asks Fusco. "You almost need one or two people to be constant reminders of all the rules. In our restaurant it comes from ownership and the executive team. I feel for [rules] to be taken seriously it has to come from the top. And second, promote the restaurants who are open and serving customers. Anything you can do to bring in traffic is helpful."

"Be patient and kind," begs Clark. "Our store may not look as full as it once was, but some of our customers are now on the phone or online, and everyone is still expecting the same great service they're used to. We do our best to lovingly prepare and serve every meal. Stay healthy, and stay home if you're sick. My worry today is that if we lose staff because they've become ill through a careless customer's contact, our entire operation could be affected. This is the biggest risk to our business and to the paychecks of our entire team."

Be patient and be kind – key advice for troubled times.





PHOTO: JASON MOWRY - UNSPLASH

## IRVINE COVID-19 CASES MORE THAN DOUBLE IN ONE MONTH

**THE CITY REPORTED 1,000 CASES AS OF JULY 20.**

BY: EVAN J. LANCASTER

Over the last month, Irvine COVID-19 cases have increased by more than 600, jumping from 262 reported on June 20 to 1,000 reported as of July 20.

The latest month-to-month increase is double the number of cumulative cases reported city-wide in June. On June 30, the city had reported a total of 387 COVID-19 cases.

During an Irvine community COVID-19 panel on July 17, Dr. Bernadette Boden-Albala, founding Dean of Public Health at UC Irvine, explained that Orange County is beginning to see exponential spread during Irvine's most recent COVID-19 update.

"We are really increasing now, again, on that exponential line," Boden-Albala said. "There was this diminished time and then – up, up, up. I'm very concerned about this."

To be specific, Boden-Albala added that in March, the positivity rate was around 4 percent, with signs

that Orange County had begun to flatten the curve.

"The rate of people getting tested who are positive has gone from about 4 percent – that's what we were seeing in March and April – to almost 8 percent now," she said.

While Irvine leaders championed their success of becoming the first city in Orange County to offer free COVID-19 testing to the public, the program became "fully booked" shortly after opening. Some residents expressed frustration regarding the inability to make an appointment.

Councilmember Melissa Fox reassured the community that registration would reopen once the first batch of appointments is processed.

"I wish that we could provide 10 times more testing than we have, particularly given how fast it has booked up," Fox said during the July 14 City Council meeting. "I really appreciate that we're looking forward to an expansion of this program as fast as

possible."

Regional data provided by the OC Health Agency list Irvine COVID-19 cases by ZIP code, as of July 20:

- 92602: 90 cases
- 92603: 73 cases
- 92604: 103 cases
- 92606: 99 cases
- 92612: 120 cases
- 92614: 135 cases
- 92617: 20 cases
- 92620: 153 cases

As of July 13, California Governor Gavin Newsom ordered the closure of fitness centers and churches, along with hair salons and barber shops across the state to help slow the spread of COVID-19. On July 16, the California Department of Public Health reported a total of 356,178 COVID-19 cases statewide.

Irvine Chief of Police Mike Hamel presented statistics on Irvine's COVID-19 testing. Hamel said Irvine had tested approximately 400 residents at Irvine's public testing site at the Orange County Great Park. He also mentioned that Irvine's per-capita rate is the lowest in comparison to Orange County's largest cities – Huntington Beach, Costa Mesa, Lake Forest, Mission Viejo, Newport Beach, Santa Ana and Tustin.

"As of July 12, we have 794 known cases, which is approximately 2.83 cases per 1,000 residents, which is in fact the lowest per-capita rate for the cities shown here," Hamel explained.

### Updates From OCHA

On Monday, July 20, the Orange County Health Agency reported 560 new COVID-19 cases, bringing the county total up to 29,986. Comparatively, one month ago, on June 20, Orange County reported a cumulative total of 13,817 COVID-19 cases.

In other words, Orange County's total number of COVID-19 cases has also doubled within the last month.

During an Orange County Health Care Agency Press Conference on July 16, acting County Health Officer Clayton Chau commented on the recent action by the Orange County Board of Education to adopt a white paper that would allow students to return to school without face masks or social distancing.

Chau explained that regardless of the differing opinions from state and local agencies, schools should reopen on a case by case basis.

"It is important to note that Supervisor Wagner and I were invited to speak on the panel, but that we did not write, edit or even review the white paper that the Orange County Board of Education brought forward," he said. "I particularly believe that the Orange County Board of Education should follow the same procedures and guidelines in determining the best way to safely reopen schools."

On Tuesday, July 14, the Irvine Unified School District Board of Education voted to require face masks on campus at all times, for students, staff and visitors. The district issued a statement clarifying that it would "not follow" the OC Board of Education's recommendations adopted in the now controversial white paper.



## SPOTLIGHT ON IRVINE BUSINESS: STRETCHLAB

**STRETCHLAB SEEKS TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR EVERYONE FROM ATHLETES TO SENIOR CITIZENS.**

BY: TARA FINLEY

PHOTOS BY: BREANNA HERNANDEZ

2020 has proven to be a tough time to start a business. With waves of restrictions and unsteady regulations, pursuing business opportunities in Southern California is not for the faint hearted. But when you have a dream, you have a dream.

The owners of the soon-to-be-opened Irvine StretchLab saw a need in the community and jumped at the chance to meet it. While introducing a new business in the era of COVID-19 is no easy task, they're determined to make it work.

"Melissa and I are fighters," says co-owner Darrin Yee. "We work in our businesses every day because we are motivated to help and serve as many people

as we can, improving someone's quality of life is very rewarding. StretchLab allows us to help people in various ways, including mobility, flexibility, posture, reducing stress."

Irvine's new StretchLab studio is owned by local residents Darrin Yee and Melissa Walls. A premier assisted stretching boutique, StretchLab brings a concept in health and wellness that can help a weekend warrior, youth athlete or senior citizen.

"StretchLab helps our members reclaim their freedom of movement and simply move better – no matter what the activity. At work you will carry a lot of tension in your shoulders or tightness in your hips from sitting long periods of time. Assisted stretching

can help alleviate that tension as well as bring mental clarity and. For gym and sports performance, it's crucial to stretch and help your body recover from a tough workout or game as well as prepare your body to reduce injury on the field," explains Yee.

Yee tells us that stretching has been proven to increase range of motion, decrease pain, increase sports performance and reduce recovery time.

"At StretchLab we practice proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation or PNF stretching," elaborates Yee. "One of our trained flexologists will ask you to push back or contract your muscles which will result in a deeper stretch and studies have shown that PNF stretching is the best method for general increases in range of motion for all clients."

Both Yee and Walls have a background in physical therapy, making this new venture a natural fit for the entrepreneurs.

"Melissa and I have worked hard rehabilitating patients all over Orange County and Irvine," shares Yee. "We wanted to work into more health and wellness. Many times we are very reactive to our health, but StretchLab allows us to be proactive towards our health."

Health is top of mind for everyone right now. What is StretchLab doing to ensure the safety of their clients and staff?

"We do a questionnaire to screen every member that comes into our studio; including a temperature check," answers Yee. "Equipment and benches are cleaned after every use. Safety is our number priority for our members."

StretchLab plans on being an integral part of the Irvine community, once orders are eased.

"We will be working with local businesses, schools and team athletics. Our goal is improving your quality of life, one stretch at a time. We love to volunteer our time in local communities giving back to everyone who has supported us," shares Yee.

To best serve their clients in these uncertain times, StretchLab will also be introducing online classes.

"We are currently working on our virtual platform," says Yee. "So no matter where you are, you don't have to miss your stretch for the day!"

To learn more about this new Irvine business, visit [StretchLab.com](http://StretchLab.com).





### THE SURROGATE, BABYTEETH, THE TRUTH AND MORE

BY: CHUCK WILSON

**I**rvine Weekly's Movie Guide is your look at the hottest films available on your TV sets, electronic devices and – as coronavirus restrictions continue to change – in select theaters and drive-ins throughout Southern California. At press time, theaters and multiplexes such as AMC chains indicate that previously planned re-openings in mid-July have been postponed to the end of July. This too, may be adjusted, at least in California, as Governor Gavin Newsom assesses COVID-19 spikes and moves reopenings accordingly.

The good news is that there's no shortage of diverse and engaging films to see. 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. This week, film critic Chuck Wilson shares his picks.

#### The Surrogate | VOD

As rich with heady dialogue as a good play, the debut feature from writer-director Jeremy Hersh is sure to inspire provocative post-screening conversation. In a commanding film debut, Jasmine Batchelor stars as Jess, a Brooklyn IT specialist pregnant with a child she's carrying for her best friend Josh (Chris Perfetti) and his husband, Aaron (Sullivan Jones). When tests reveal that the child will be born with Down syndrome, Jess struggles to respond optimistically, even as Josh, Aaron and Jess's own parents are consumed by doubt. It's in Jess's nature to put the concerns of others first, but gradually, she comes to see that the choice here isn't just Joss and Aaron's to make.

A movie where every scene could easily come with a topic sentence title card – Eugenics, Reproductive Rights, Race, Gender – **The Surrogate** remains grounded in the personal, which seems

something of a miracle given its intensity of subject. At any moment, someone could say the wrong thing, and the fear of that makes this a movie with the built-in tension of a thriller. If the resolution feels a bit abrupt, dramatically, the end-title sequence that follows is so lovely and so right that you're not likely to mind a bit.

#### Babyteeth | Amazon Prime

Milla (Eliza Scanlan) is 16 when 23-year-old Moses (Toby Wallace) bumps into her on a Sydney, Australia metro platform. In a blink, she's brought him home and into her life. Tatted, raggedy and irresistible, Moses is a junkie who nonetheless proves to be a kindred spirit for Milla, an insular suburban girl navigating a terminal illness and well-meaning parents (Ben Mendelsohn and Essie Davis) trying to pretend that all will be well.

It's one of the many virtues of director Shannon Murphy's accomplished debut film, adapted from screenwriter Rita Kalnejais' play that the particulars of Milla's disease are not relevant. In this view, she's not dying; she's coming into her own, and Moses, who may or may not return the romantic feelings Milla is developing for him, is helping her get there.

**Babyteeth** has a fine cast and memorable scenes – a classmate thoughtlessly asking to try on Milla's wig; a mother watching her child dancing with abandon; a father realizing that his daughter is asking for a favor for after she's gone from this world. But the film is also a bit overstuffed, as if the filmmakers loved the characters (and actors) too much to cut them as mercilessly as they should. For me, the too much-ness of **Babyteeth** undercut the poignancy of the film's ending but most folks find it wrenching. I envy them the feeling.

#### Ella: Just One of Those Things | VOD

She was a wonder from the very beginning. At age 16, a girl named Ella

Jane Fitzgerald entered an amateur night contest at the Apollo Theater in Harlem. She was planning to dance but so intimidated by the performance of the dancing Edward Sisters that she opted to sing instead. The crowd was restless, and at first, as dancer Norma Miller recalls in the stodgy but effective new documentary, **Ella: Just One of Those Things**, they booted. But then, Fitzgerald's voice took hold. "She shut us up so quick," Miller says, "you could hear a rat piss on cotton."

A star had been born, although big time fame was still a few years away. Veteran British filmmaker Leslie Woodhead tracks Fitzgerald's brilliant career beat by beat in a film that could have used more of Ella singing, especially in its first half, and a little less testimony, perhaps, from colleagues and scholars. There is history aplenty, including fascinating archival photos of the Harlem Renaissance, as well as remembrances of the difficulties Fitzgerald faced – even after she'd become "The First Lady of Song" – in a racist, segregated America.

In the home stretch, Woodhead finally lets Fitzgerald cut loose, most thrillingly from her legendary 1960 Berlin concert which included a genius-level five-minute vocal improvisation during the song "How High the Moon." Footage of her singing "A House Is Not a Home" dazzles, too, and did for me what a music doc should always do: inspired a two-day Ella listening spree.

#### Welcome to Chechnya | HBO

In 2017, the Putin-sponsored Chechnyan government, led by right-wing strongman Ramzan Kadyrov, began arresting, torturing and killing gay, lesbian and transgender people, while also encouraging their family members to do the same. In his riveting and disturbing new film, journalist-turned-filmmaker David France (the magnificent **How to Survive a Plague**) embeds with the Russian LGBTQ Network, a small, incredibly brave group that took it upon themselves to smuggle queer Chechnyans out of the country.

France begins with Anya, a 21-year-old Muslim lesbian whose uncle has threatened to reveal her truth to her father – who will surely kill her – unless she sleeps with him. Sneaking Anya away to a safe location, in a three-hour window of opportunity, becomes a high-tension escape.

There's also Grisha, who is willing to become the first victim to go public with

his story of torture but only if he and his entire family, including his mother, sister and her children, can first be moved to safety. In a safe house, we come to know other victims, including one who'll try to kill himself just as he's about to be transported to Canada and a new life, an act of desperation that suggests that there is no such thing as freedom after you've been tortured for being you are. This is vital, essential filmmaking.

#### The Truth | VOD

There should be gift cards for Video On Demand movies. If there were, I'd give my home-trapped, movie-mad friends **The Truth**, the marvelous new film from director Hirokazu Kore-eda (**Shoplifters**, **Nobody Knows**). The Japanese master's first film outside his home country, and first in another language, proves to be a profound delight.

In a performance that wittily draws on her own storied career, Catherine Deneuve stars as Fabienne, a revered French actress worried that her best years, and best roles, are behind her. A proper diva, Fabienne has just published her memoirs, entitled **The Truth**, prompting her screenwriter daughter, Lumir (Juliette Binoche), to come to Paris from America with her husband (Ethan Hawke) and young daughter. Old patterns of mother-daughter estrangement quickly emerge as Lumir begins questioning her mother's printed version of their shared past. "My memories, my book," Fabienne declares defiantly.

As it happens, Fabienne is filming a low-budget science fiction film about memory, aging and regret, themes she's so reluctant to embrace that her performance is suffering. Lumir has entrenched theories about her mother's failings and is almost gleeful about the ways in which this arid little sci-fi flick is bringing Fabienne's past sins to light. But Lumir may be wrong about a few details of that past, which means in turn that she's wrong about herself, too.

One of the world's great filmmakers, Kore-eda is also among its gentlest. **The Truth** always feels true to the every day, even though it's a story about show folk. The screenplay is quotably acerbic but also steeped in melancholy, as is his way. But here, in France, with the great Deneuve before him, the director seems lighter of foot, more playful. Kore-eda reportedly communicated to his cast through an interpreter but you'd never know it. Filmmaker and cast appear to have been united, if not by language, then by joy.



## PALM SPRINGS IS A REFRESHING TAKE ON THE TIME LOOP COMEDY

### ANDY SAMBERG AND CRISTIN MILIOTI'S CHEMISTRY DRIVE THE FILM.

BY: ASHER LUBERTO

**P**alm Springs' irreverent hero, Nyles (Andy Samberg) is a guy who just wants to relax, crack a beer and crack jokes. We first meet him at his friend's wedding ceremony, lounging in a red Hawaiian shirt and yellow shorts. Like so many Samberg characters, Nyles is both a goofball and smarter than he looks, the kind of leading man to announce "I didn't see that coming!" when really he's two steps ahead of everyone else. At the ceremony, he predicts every dance move and hookup before it happens, which means he's either really, really perceptive, or he's lived this day before. We soon find out it's the latter.

Written by Andy Siara and directed by Max Barbakow, **Palm Springs** is a satisfying, if standard story about someone reliving the same 24 hours over and over. Nyles is trapped in a wormhole that continually sends him back to the same Saturday. He entertains himself with his preeminence, which he uses to seduce his fellow wedding guests. That is before the maid of honor and sister of the bride, Sarah (Cristin Milioti), fol-

lows him into a mysteriously glowing cave. Sarah, naturally, wakes up on her sister's wedding day (again) with questions. "It's one of those time loop things you might have heard about," Nyles explains.

On a scale of other films about time loops, Palm Springs lands somewhere between **Groundhog Day** (the classic starring Bill Murray and Andie MacDowell) and **Source Code** (with Jake Gyllenhaal and Michelle Monaghan).

Sandberg and Milioti have a mercurial chemistry, flashing from playful banter to cold, cutting arguments in an instant. Their relationship allows the time loop narrative to go places it hasn't gone before, exploring the differing perspectives of two people trapped in the same nightmare. It's an effective concept, pinning Samberg's chill composure against Milioti's jittery determination. While Nyles treats it like a vacation, content to down brews on a pool floaty, Sarah does all she can to break the loop: she tries drugs, dying and even drives to Texas, a feat that would be impressive had Nyles not previously made it to Africa on a crystal

meth binge. She tries everything to escape, but fails.

In the film's second act, Barbakow breezes past the "Chekhov's long winter" portion of the **Groundhog Day** formula, maintaining an airy, laid-back vibe throughout. The film is at its best during the big moments; when Sarah stands on a moving car, when Nyles pulls a bomb out of the wedding cake ("don't worry, I used to be a bomb guy") and when the pair find themselves performing an elaborate dance routine in matching denim jackets to "Megatron Man." The music in **Palm Springs** feels like a highlight – and after the other needle drops about time passing too quickly, we get perfect selections such as "Time After Time" and "Oh! You Pretty Things."

There's also a supporting cast packed with lively characters including Camila Mendes as the bride, Peter Gallagher as the father of the bride and J.K. Simmons as the last guy you want showing up at your wedding. Simmons does get a touching monologue about living in the moment – think Michael Stuhlbarg's speech in **Call Me By Your Name** or John Hamilton's in **Eighth Grade** but with poop jokes. Nyles applies that advice to his own life, where he makes the most of every second, minute and day with Sarah.

**Palm Springs** fills its 90 minutes with sweet silliness, mostly in scenes highlighting Nyles and Sarah's budding romance. These charming leads are as refreshing as a dip in the pool on a hot summer day, even if the premise isn't new. The time-loop movie has never really been about finding a way out, but finding a way to change for the better, providing its characters valuable lessons about life and themselves. In the end, we don't care if Nyles and Sarah make it out, as long as they make it together.

Available on Hulu.





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*- Jim and Carol Hoffman*