

The Studio City Sherman Oaks Encino NEWS

Vol. XV No.6 Also Serving the Neighboring Communities of N. Hollywood, Valley Village, Toluca Lake and Tarzana April 2026

FARMER'S MARKETS

Every Sunday

Encino.

ONEgeneration Encino Farmers Market. Every Sunday from 8am – 1pm. 17400 Victory Blvd. (between White Oak and Balboa) with plenty of convenient free parking.

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Farmers Market 9am – 2pm. LA Valley College. 5800 Fulton Avenue, Valley Glen

Studio City.

From 8am to 2pm the Studio City Farmers Market. 12052 Ventura Place.

Every Tuesday

Sherman Oaks Farmers Market From 3 to 7pm at Westfield Mall near the Macys 14006 Riverside Dr

Guide to Local Events

Tuesday, April 14

Virtual Public Hearing 10:30 am

The community will have a chance to comment on the subdivision of the PINZ site at 12555 Ventura Boulevard for the construction of a mixed-use development comprised of 814 residential dwelling units and 75,968 sq ft of commercial uses. The public hearing will be conducted entirely virtually and will allow for remote public comment.

Options to participate: By phone: (669)900-9128 or (213)338-8477 Meeting ID 886 0777 0749#

With a PC, MAC, iPad, iPhone, or Android, click on this URL

<https://planning-lacity-org.zoom.us/j/88607770749>

Enter meeting ID 886 0777 0749 Passcode: 780596

The meeting's agenda will be posted no later than 72 hours beforehand at: planning4la.org/hearings

Thursday, April 16

The Burbank African Violet Society will be having their next club meeting @ 10:00 am. The location is The Little White Chapel Christian Church, 1711 North Avon Street in Burbank. "Preparing Your African Violets and Cousins for Show." please telephone (661) 940-3990 or see website: www.burbankafricanviolets.weebly.com

WHY LA'S NEWEST HOUSING POLICY IS A DISASTER FOR SHERMAN OAKS

by Tom Glick

In 2020, the Sherman Oaks community reached a hard-fought compromise on the historic Sunkist Building site. After years of debate, the community agreed to a 249-unit residential limit specifically because the iconic Brutalist headquarters was to remain a "commercial employment anchor" after Sunkist moved their headquarters to Valencia. (Ed. Note Brutalist architecture style's striking look is characterized by raw concrete, bold geometric forms, and a focus on functionality over ornamentation)

It was a balanced vision for Citrus Commons - one that paired luxury apartments and a Trader Joe's market with 127,000 square feet of office space to preserve the site's historical identity as the heart of California's citrus industry.

Today, this balance is being dismantled through a bureaucratic "bait-and-switch". Developer IMT Residential is attempting to use the city's newly minted Citywide Adaptive Reuse Ordinance (ARO) - which took effect on February 1, 2026 - to bypass the public entirely. By filing ministerial permit application #25016-10001 -04185 on February 16, 2026, the developer seeks to strip away 40,000 square feet of promised office space and jam in an additional 95 market-rate units. The city's interpretation that the ARO exempts this project from oversight is not just a policy error - it is a betrayal of the public trust.

The city's ARO is designed to streamline the conversion of under-utilized buildings into housing by providing "by-right" or administrative approval for structures at least 15 years old. The developer's own leadership has admitted that these new rules allow them to "move forward a lot faster" and - critically - avoid a potentially lengthy environmental impact review. But the Sunkist Building is not just



View of the Sunkist Building in 1969

any "under-utilized" office. It was recognized as a Historic-Cultural Monument in February. The original 2020 approval came with a complex set of conditions, including the preservation of the office component to maintain the building's integrity. By allowing a "ministerial" permit to override these project-specific conditions, the city is effectively rendering its own Planning Commission and City Council determinations meaningless.

While Los Angeles is gripped by a housing crisis - especially affordable housing - this "bait-and-switch" provides a massive density bonus and lucrative zoning windfall to the developer without requiring a single affordable housing set-aside. Under this ARO, the developer can add nearly 100 units exclusively at market rate. This is a slap in the face to the concept of inclusionary housing. If the city continues to allow developers to bypass public hearings and affordability requirements through administrative "fixes", our neighborhood's character and the public interest will be sold to the highest bidder as in this case.

The contradiction in local leadership is glaring. Council District 4 has long positioned itself as a champion for equitable housing. Yet, as a developer bypasses the safeguards meant to protect our community, CD4 remains silent. Advocacy is hollow if it stops at the gates of an "over the counter" permit. CD4 must explain how they can support a 100-percent market-rate expansion that completely erases the

"employment anchor" status they once defended.

The original Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for this site was based on a daytime office population. Replacing that with a 24-hour residential population fundamentally changes the impact on our infrastructure - from sewage and power peaks to emergency response times. To skip a new environmental review via a ministerial permit is a clear violation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Furthermore, our neighborhood has endured years of construction noise and traffic. The Sherman Oaks community was promised an end was in sight. Now, the developer wants to pivot and effectively start a "brand-new" project, extending this disruption indefinitely.

The Sherman Oaks Homeowner's Association is calling for an immediate stay on this permit. We are not against change, but we are against a process that rewards "bait-and-switch" tactics and ignores the Sherman Oaks community's input. The city - and specifically CD4 - must halt this permit and return this project to the public arena where transparency and history are valued over developer convenience.

Tom Glick is the Planning and Land Use Co-Chair for the Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association

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scsoenews.com

As I'm writing this, my family is travelling through Yosemite National Park for spring break. For the past few days, I've been listening to the thunderous crashes of Yosemite Falls and Bridalveil Falls and Vernal Falls, hiking through grizzled redwood and sequoia groves, and marvelling at the vastness of Yosemite Valley's mammoth granite cliffside. The grandeur of this landscape has made me reflect on environmentalism, including an important upcoming event: Earth Day.

Earth Day began in 1970 as a call for environmentalist legislation. At this point, the Environmental Protection Agency had not been formed and the

This April, Remember to Celebrate Earth Day! By Harper Nosek - Mulvihill



Hetch Hetchy Reservoir, Yosemite National Park Clean Water and Air Acts had not been passed. The first Earth Day, in April 1970, was organized by Senator Gaylord Nelson in order to

force politicians to reckon with environmentalism and environmental policy. It was a massive success, and the EPA, Clean Water Act, and Clean Air Act quickly ensued from the first Earth Day when they were passed in December 1970.

Seeing Yosemite has been surreal. Today, my family and I hiked around Hetch Hetchy Reservoir, which provides water for much of the Bay Area. The landscape was incredible—distant sloping valleys, cedar-speckled cliffsides, and waterfalls both gushing and trickling all surrounded the reservoir. Just as incredible, though, was

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Standing Up for Immigrant Families Is Standing Up for America



By US Congressman
 Brad Sherman

Across our country—and in communities like mine in the San Fernando Valley — we are seeing a troubling pattern: immigrant families living in fear, unsure if a loved one will be taken from them without warning. Actions by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement have too often targeted individuals who are contributing to our community, tearing apart families and undermining our shared sense of security. This is not who we are as a nation.

I have seen firsthand the consequences of these policies. Parents separated from children. Spouses left without answers. Individuals detained despite having viable claims under existing law. These are not abstract policy debates—they are human stories unfolding in our neighborhoods.

That is why I have made it a priority to stand with immigrant families. I have testified at immigration hearings on behalf of wrongfully detained constituents, led Congressional delegations to inspect detention facilities, and worked to shine a light on conditions that too often escape public scrutiny. I have also consistently opposed funding for enforcement policies that I believe are unjust and counterproductive. But oversight alone is not enough. We need reform.

I joined my colleague Rep. Delia Ramirez to introduce the Born in the USA Act, reaffirming a simple but fundamental principle: if you are born in

the United States, you are a citizen. That is not a policy preference — it is a constitutional guarantee. I have also co-sponsored the Stop Excessive Force in Immigration Act to ensure humane treatment and accountability.

Additionally, I support the Temporary Family Visitation Act, which would provide a lawful pathway for non-citizen relatives of U.S. citizens to visit their families. Keeping families connected should not be controversial; it should be common sense.

To be clear, our immigration system does need reform. But it must also reflect our values — fairness, due process, and respect for human dignity. Policies that rely on fear and broad targeting do not make us safer; they make us less just.

My office has assisted thousands of constituents navigating immigration and visa challenges—often correcting errors or delays that should never have occurred in the first place. These services are provided free of charge, because helping people access the system fairly is part of our responsibility.

America has always been a nation shaped by immigrants. Our strength comes not from closing doors indiscriminately, but from upholding the rule of law while recognizing the humanity of those who seek to build a life here.

Standing up for immigrant families is not just about policy, it is about who we are.

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DEADLINE

Second week of the month.
You can E-Mail us
at bigvalleypublications@gmail.com.
We reserve the right to edit any submissions for space and do not return any editorial.

Letter to the Editor

The News welcomes your letters. They should be no more than 300 words. Hand written letters are acceptable only if they are legible. Letters MUST contain the writer's telephone number and address for verification purposes. It will not be published unless the writer requests it. Writer's name and valley living area will be published.

The SC SO Enc News is published monthly, and delivered to homes in the Studio City, Sherman Oaks & Encino Areas

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Publisher's Note

The next time you're sitting in traffic that's barely moving, crawling along Ventura Boulevard, give a shout out to the city council representatives who quietly gutted the carefully crafted Ventura Cahuenga Specific Plan in February. Sherman Oaks residents feel particularly betrayed when developers seem to have undue influence with their councilmember these days. Our cover story submission from the Sherman Oaks Homeowner's Association Planning and Land Use Committee Co-Chair Tom Glick, about the bait and switch taking place on the Sunkist building site, is just one example of how residents' plans and hopes for reasonable growth get sledgehammered by City Hall.

Another project seeking approval in CD4 is the subdivision of a site that includes the PINZ and Carney's properties, on Ventura Boulevard between Whitsett and Coldwater, for construction of a mixed use development with 814 residential dwelling units. Community members only recently learned of a Virtual Public Hearing on Tuesday, April 14, after minimal public outreach.

Has anybody given any thought as to how to keep traffic moving when thousands more cars on the road create NYC style gridlock near the intersection of Coldwater and Ventura Boulevards?

On a brighter note, The News is once again thrilled to be the print sponsor of the Encino Food & Wine Festival, the social event of the season. We look forward to mingling and sipping *en plein air* with old and new friends while helping to support the programs of ONEgeneration.

Cheers to spring.

You can also pick up

The News at:
Studio City Library
12511 Moorpark St.

Laurel Canyon Newstand
Corner of Laurel Canyon
& Ventura Blvd,
Studio City

Vendome Wines & Spirits
10600 Riverside Dr,
Toluca Lake

M-Street Coffee
13251 Moorpark St
Sherman Oaks

Coffee Roasters
13567 Ventura Blvd.
Sherman Oaks

Sherman Oaks Library
14245 Moorpark St.

Encino/Tarzana Library
18231 Ventura Blvd.

Encino Community Center
4935 Balboa Blvd.

Mobys Coffee & Tea Co.
10513 Burbank Blvd.
North Hollywood

FROM THE ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

Important Deadlines for Businesses with Personal Property

By Jeff Prang
Los Angeles
County Assessor



I want to remind the business community about two important deadlines each year that can sometimes be overlooked but should not be: the April 1 filing deadline for the Business Property Statement, and the final May 7 deadline to avoid penalties.

By the time this column appears, the April 1 deadline will likely have already passed. However, businesses can still file their Business Property Statement through May 7 without incurring a penalty. That is an important point worth repeating: filing after April 1 does not automatically trigger a penalty, as long as the statement is postmarked by 5:00 PM on May 7.

Most businesses are aware of these deadlines and file on time. But occasionally a new business, or even an established business, overlooks the requirement and faces an unnecessary additional cost. My goal is to provide clear information so that does not happen.

Here is what this filing requirement involves: each year, Business Property Statements, also known as Form 571-L, are mailed by my office to most commercial, industrial, and professional firms in Los Angeles County. These forms provide the basis for determining assessments on fixtures, equipment, and other taxable personal property. Businesses that own business personal property and fixtures with an aggregate cost of \$100,000 or more are required to file the statement, even if they did not receive a mailed-out statement.

Businesses may mail their completed Business Property Statement to their assigned district office, which can be located at the top of the pre-printed form or by searching an Assessor Identification Number (AIN) as well as your business address. The statement may also be filed electronically, if they qualify. Additional filing information is available on the Los Angeles County Assessor's website at <https://assessor.lacounty.gov/businessowners/business-prop-statement-filing>.

So, what exactly is business personal property? In general, business personal property includes all

SC Library Book Sale

Next Sale: April 28th

The Studio City Library has a Used Book Sale on the last Saturday of the Month from 9:30am-12:30 pm. 12511 Moorpark St. Studio City 91604 818-755-7873

SO Library Book Sale - Next Sale April 12-Used Book Sale on the 2nd Saturday of the Month From 9:30am-1:30 pm. 14245 Moorpark Street, Sherman Oaks, 91423 818-205-9716

property owned or leased by a business, excluding inventory, land and structures. It includes machinery, computers, office equipment such as copiers and telephones, furniture such as desks and chairs, and business supplies.

Tangible property that is owned, claimed, possessed, or controlled in the conduct of a profession, trade, or business may be subject to property tax. Business personal property is valued annually as of January 1.

Although April 1 is the filing deadline established under state law, businesses are granted until May 7 (by 5:00 p.m.) to file without penalty. If not postmarked by 5:00 p.m. on May 7th, a 10 percent penalty will be applied. If May 7 falls on a weekend or holiday, the deadline moves to the next business day. In 2026, May 7 falls on a Thursday, making close of business (5:00 p.m.) that day the final deadline to avoid the penalty.

Businesses with personal property and fixtures costing less than \$100,000 are generally not required to file annually unless requested by the Assessor. Instead, a value is established through an initial filing or an on-site appraisal, and that value may later be adjusted through subsequent appraisals.

If a business owner disagrees with an assessed value, the first step should be to contact my office to review the assessment. If the issue is not resolved satisfactorily, a formal appeal may be filed with the Assessment Appeals Board by November 30. That appeal right exists independently of the Assessor's review process.

One final point is especially important: if the Assessor's Office mails you a Business Property Statement, you are required by law to return it, regardless of the amount of personal property involved.

Los Angeles County Assessor Jeff Prang was first elected in 2014. Upon taking office, Prang implemented sweeping reforms to ensure that the strictest ethical guidelines rooted in fairness, accuracy and integrity would be adhered to in his office, which is the largest office of its kind in the nation with about 1,400 employees and provides the foundation for a property tax system that can generate about \$20 billion annually.



GREETINGS FROM CD4

Dear Friends, We talk a lot about the cost of housing, and rightly so—Los Angeles has some of the highest housing costs anywhere in the country. But there's another area in which LA has the dubious distinction of leading the country: we also have some of the worst air quality of any major US city.

A lot of work has been done to improve the City's air quality since the high (technically very low!) watermark of the 1960s and '70s, when the region's air quality was so bad that many residents didn't know that LA was surrounded by mountain ranges because they couldn't see them. And we've seen some genuine success since then! The prevalence of major air pollutants in LA decreased by 2% to 7% per year, each year, from 1960 to 2010, though we've seen a worrying reversal of this trend in the last few years. A lot of this progress is due to efforts at the state and national levels: the Clean Air Act created a system to regulate industrial air quality emissions, and the California Air Resources Board developed some of the most stringent emissions rules for cars and trucks anywhere in the world.

Despite this progress, however, there remains a lot of work to be done. Los Angeles still ranks as the worst city in the country for ozone pollution, and in the bottom 10 for several other pollutants. In fact, the City fails to meet federal standards for five of the six air pollutants listed in the Clean Air Act.

In 2021, I was appointed to serve as the representative for the City of LA to

By Nithya Raman
Council District 4



the governing board of the South Coast Air Quality Management District, or SCAQMD. This relatively obscure local government agency has a big charge: drag the four-county region of Los Angeles, Riverside, Orange, and San Bernardino counties into compliance with federal air quality standards. During my four years on the SCAQMD board, I pushed for stronger regulations on some of the most polluting industries in the region: warehouses in Riverside, railyards in Downtown LA, the ports in San Pedro, and all of the trucks, trains and ships that serve them and spew harmful pollutants all over the region in the process. Though my time on the AQMD Board has come to a close, I remain deeply committed to this work and to holding our regional institutions accountable for delivering on the promise of cleaner air for every Angeleno. The path to a fully decarbonized energy system is in front of us, and the foundation we've built over the past four years will continue to move us forward. Continuing to build on 50 years of progress on air quality is one of the most important legacies we can leave to the future of our City, and that work is far from finished.

Warmly,
Nithya

*Councilmember Nithya Raman's CD4 is the only 'bridge district,' stretching from the hillsides to the Valley and knitting together communities from both sides of the hills. Parts of Silver Lake to Los Feliz; to the Hollywood Hills, Sherman Oaks to Encino, and parts of Studio City, Van Nuys, and Reseda.
Contact: 213-473-7004 | contactCD4@lacity.org*

FROM THE DESK OF CD2

One of the hardest issues we dealt with in Council over the past month was our response to SB 79, a State Senate bill that severely limits the City's ability to regulate new housing construction within a half-mile of public transportation stops if the project meets the State's demand for more housing density.

After considering several options for complying with the State's mandate, we finally agreed on a compromise, allowing two- to four-story units in designated areas within the half-mile limit. We will not require further compliance with SB 79 until 2030. In our own District 2, I will advocate for new housing where it makes the most sense to build, as on commercial corridors with existing transportation infrastructure. I have also ordered reports from City departments on the anticipated demands that higher density will make on traffic, parking, safety, infrastructure and emergency services, so we can prepare for the impacts of future development.

For years, the assessment that property owners have paid to maintain their neighborhood lighting systems has remained unchanged while the costs of the service have escalated. The City has covered the shortfall by paying out of the general fund, reducing the resources available for other essential services. The City's residential and commercial property owners properties will soon have a chance to vote on an assessment that pays the actual cost of lighting the City.

In recent years, our City, like many others, has suffered from a wave of metal and wire theft. Street lights throughout

By Adrin Nazarian
Council District 2



the City have been vandalized, then repaired, only to be vandalized again. A single theft may net a thief a few dollars from a crooked recycler while it costs the City hundreds of thousands to repair the damaged infrastructure.

Last month we expanded the trust fund that pays rewards for information leading to criminal convictions for the theft of metal and copper wire from City infrastructure: \$1,000 for information leading to conviction of a misdemeanor; \$5,000 for a felony. It now pays a lot more to turn in a copper thief than it does to steal copper.

We also added funds to the City's Municipal Improvement Corporation (MICLA) Program to pay for installing solar streetlights at locations throughout the City, at least 500 per Council District. These lights have no copper wire for thieves to steal. I hope we will eventually replace all of our wired streetlights with solar; this is a big step in the right direction. Since the Council's vote, Mayor Bass has committed to an even greater increase in the number of solar-powered streetlights. I look forward to voting on this item next month, when we consider the City's budget for 2026-2027.

Adrin Nazarian is Councilmember for District 2, including neighborhoods in North Hollywood, Studio City, Sun Valley, Toluca Lake, Valley Glen, Valley Village and Van Nuys. You can reach his District Office at (818) 755-7676, write directly to councilmember.nazarian@lacity.gov, visit the District 2 website cd2.lacity.gov or follow the Councilmember on social media @cd2losangeles)

FROM THE THIRD DISTRICT SUPERVISOR

Lindsey Horvath LA County 3rd Dist



Dear Beloved Community Members,

As we move into April, I'm feeling energized by the momentum we're building across Los Angeles County. From expanding transit to protecting jobs and improving how we deliver care, this past month was about taking action that meets the moment. The challenges we face are real, but so is our ability to respond with focus and urgency.

This was a monumental month for Los Angeles. Metro approved the K Line Northern Extension along the San Vicente-Fairfax alignment—connecting the Hollywood Bowl to LAX on one continuous line, running through the heart of West Hollywood. This 9.7-mile extension will link the South Bay to Inglewood, Crenshaw, Mid-City, and the Fairfax District, creating the first true north-south connection.

This is not just a transit project—it's a generational investment in connection, access, and opportunity, and a transformational moment for our region.

We also took action to protect Los Angeles County's entertainment workforce, a cornerstone of our local economy. As the proposed Warner Bros. Discovery-Paramount Skydance merger moves forward, the Board approved my motion to analyze its potential impacts on jobs, competition, and long-term industry stability. Thousands of families depend on this industry, and we are committed to protecting both

their livelihoods and the future of storytelling in Los Angeles.

At the Board, we also advanced reforms to better integrate mental health care into our homelessness response. Too many people living on our streets are navigating serious mental health challenges, and our systems must meet them where they are. This motion expands field-based care, strengthens coordination between departments, and improves accountability so people can access support more quickly. It's about building a system that is more responsive, more compassionate, and more effective.

Progress requires urgency, coordination, and a willingness to do things differently when needed. That's the work we are doing every day—and we're moving it forward together.

Stay informed, stay involved, and let's keep moving forward together.

As always, my office is here to serve. For the latest information from the Third District and more on our upcoming events, sign up for our newsletter at lindseyhorvath.lacounty.gov, and follow us on social media at [@lindseyhorvath](https://twitter.com/lindseyhorvath).

With gratitude,
Lindsey P. Horvath
Supervisor, 3rd District

The Third District of Los Angeles County, is home to over 2 million people. The District contains countless cultural landmarks, including the Getty Center and the Santa Monica Pier. It encompasses most of the Santa Monica Mountains and the San Fernando Valley. She can be reached at: (213) 974-3333, ThirdDistrict@bos.lacounty.gov

FROM THE FIFTH DISTRICT SUPERVISOR

Kathryn Barger
LACounty 5th Dist.



April is Arts Month, and there are opportunities to celebrate and explore creativity and culture all over Los Angeles County. Just in time to commemorate the month, our L.A. County Department of Arts and Culture just launched a brand-new webpage featuring its extensive Civic Art Collection.

For the first time, anyone can browse the County's public art holdings from their devices, whether they're sitting in a County park, exploring a County library, or curious about the mural outside their local health clinic, fire station, or courthouse.

Since 2004, L.A. County's Civic Art Policy has built one of the region's most expansive public art collections, one artwork at a time. These incredible artworks are embedded in everyday spaces across the County. With this interactive and exciting tool, residents can find, explore, and connect with these works.

To celebrate this new resource, and to make the most of Arts Month, I encourage you to make a scavenger hunt out of the collection! You can search the website by artist, title, or location to discover what's in your neighborhood—or anywhere around the region. On the website,

you'll see pictures and background information about each work of art so you can learn about the history, inspiration, and story behind every artist and every piece of art.

Artwork ranges from sculptures to murals, from paintings to mosaics, from historic to new, and from traditional to contemporary. There's truly something for everyone's taste and interests. Head out with your friends or family, or embark on your own, to discover all the amazing art awaiting you.

You can visit lacountyarts.org or navigate to the webpage directly at bit.ly/4tpBGsF to uncover the collection. In addition to civic artworks, you can also explore grants, student internships, community events, educational opportunities, and more on their website.

I'm wishing you a happy Arts Month! Here's to more creativity and connection in the month ahead.

Supervisor Kathryn Barger represents the 5th supervisorial district of Los Angeles County. The 5th supervisorial district includes portions of 20 cities, 63 unincorporated communities, 15 neighborhoods in the city of Los Angeles, home to nearly two million people. Contact her office @ (213) 974-5555 Her e-mail: kathryn@bos.lacounty.gov



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SPIRITED ENCOUNTERS by Elizabeth Kate



Spring has only just begun but the recent hot weather screams "Summer!" All this scorching heat demands refreshment. What is one of the most invigorating ways to beat the unseasonable heat? Why, bitters, of course!

Bitters present a world of flavor outside the standard selections of simple cocktails, beer, and wine. Let's be honest, it's a yawn to order yet another glass of the House Red, a beer, or a gin and tonic. Even cocktails get boring when you fall into the rut of ordering the same old thing over and over. Bitters are the easy antidote to cocktail fatigue. They are a great way to avoid a flood of mediocrity passing through our lips, and to try something engaging and delicious.

What are bitters anyway? They are top-secret blends of special herbs and spices, fruit, flowers, and bark, a healthy dose of alcohol, and a splash of water infused into magical elixirs. Bitters are blended into cocktails to add flavor and intrigue. They are intensely concentrated and rarely, if ever, enjoyed alone.

Centuries back, doctors prescribed bitters to their patients to help with ailments like colic, gout, and gastritis. Even today, a few splashes of Angostura bitters mixed with soda water can help to calm a queasy stomach. It's likely that the very physicians who prescribed the bitter herbal remedies were the first to notice that a dash of bitters mixed with water or other beverages tastes quite appealing.

Bitters come in a multitude of flavors from the licorice-flavored Peychaud's to spicy Angostura, to the fruity tones found in Campari and Aperol. Campari and Aperol

are both bitters and liqueurs. Not only do Campari and Aperol create delicious cocktails, but their glorious colors also make them an eye-catching party in a glass.

Europeans discovered the joys of bitters long before Americans did. If you've ever traveled Europe in the summertime, you may have noticed chic Europeans sipping exotic-looking bright red, icy beverages along the beaches and piazzas. These sophisticated patrons were likely enjoying a Negroni, Americano, or maybe a tall Campari and soda. All three of these drinks are made with the ever-popular Campari, a classic Italian bitter that adds color, flavor and alcohol to a cocktail.

Campari was first created in Italy, in 1860 by Gaspare Campari. Its red color was originally created with a dye made from crushed insects. In 2006, the Campari Company changed the recipe, eliminating the insects, and making Campari a safe choice for vegetarians and omnivores alike.

Campari is an alcoholic beverage with approximately 22% alcohol. When mixed with soda, it's decidedly less alcoholic than say, a cocktail made with vodka, but still gives a nice little kick. A great way to enjoy Campari is to mix it with soda and serve on the rocks with a garnish of fresh orange and a maraschino cherry. The flavor is both sweet and bitter with a spicy zing. Campari is always a festive choice at a gathering and is a vital addition to every home bar.

Aperol is another favorite. The refreshing

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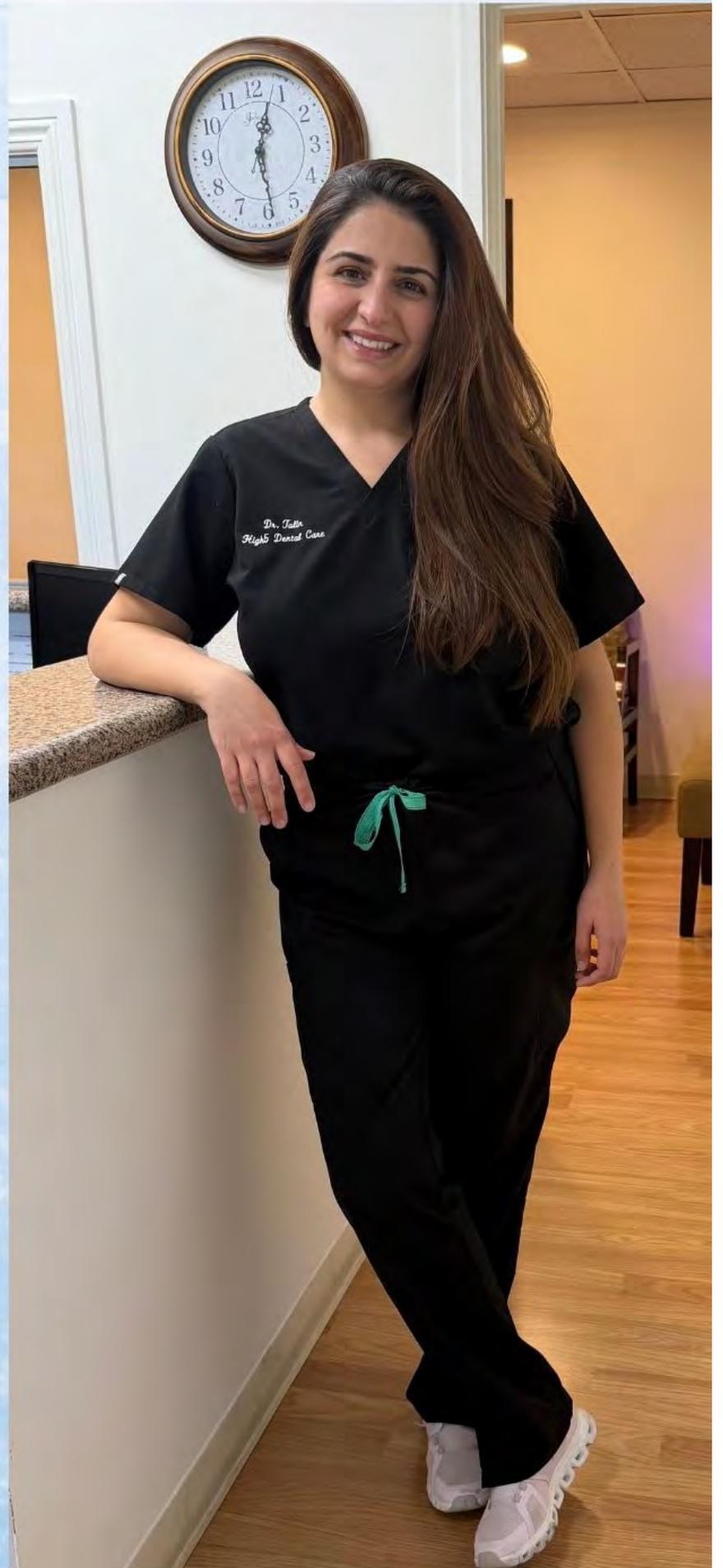
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MONTHLY RECIPE

By Lorraine Alessandro

Sweet Potato Fries

Fresh as Spring, yet as spicy as you like it! Baked sweet potato fries have that perfect balance of salty and sweet. Healthier than traditional fries with all the great crunch you crave.

sheet in a single layer. They get crispier if they're not overcrowded. Total cook time about 30 minutes...flipping half way through to get even crisping.

Great with any dipping sauce from ketchup to garlic aioli!

- 2 - 3 sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into thin strips
- 2 tablespoons of olive oil
- 1 teaspoon of chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon of garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional for extra heat)
- Parsley or cilantro for garnish



Preheat oven to 425. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
Toss sweet potatoes in a large bowl with olive oil to coat. Mix all the spices together in a small bowl. Sprinkle the spices all over the sweet potatoes. Toss to evenly coat. Arrange the sweet potatoes on the baking



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Earth Day

Cont. from Pg. 1

the tangible impact of this land, which provides clean water for millions of people over a hundred miles away. The hike was a reminder that clean and protected nature is not just beautiful but necessary.

Earth Day reminds us that nature is both awe-inspiring and essential. Taking time to acknowledge Earth Day is the perfect way to reflect on the importance of nature and environmentalism.

This year, Earth Day will take place on Wednesday, April 22nd. Angelenos can go out to celebrate Earth Day with an Earth Day festival at the National History Museum on the 19th or with an upcycled weaving activity at the North Hollywood Amelia Earhart Library on the 23rd. You could also practice some small-scale environmental stewardship this Earth Day: pick up trash in your neighborhood, save water by fixing that perpetual sink leak, or start a small native plant garden in your yard.

Environmentalism encompasses the vastness of Yosemite and the entire National Park System, but it also encompasses these small daily actions. Earth Day helps us make space to engage in this kind of everyday environmentalism, and through this celebration, we can all help build a more eco-friendly culture.



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Invasion

Cont. from Pg. 10

members and friends have been replaced by someone—or something—else. Local doctor Miles Bennell (Kevin McCarthy) and his ex-girlfriend Betty Driscoll (Dana Wynter) soon discover that humans are being replaced by duplicates created in the seed pods—exact in every way except they are completely without emotion. This 1956 film, based on a 1954 novel by Jack Finney, played so cleverly on the audience's fears of slowly losing not just themselves but all they loved to unseen invaders that it has been remade three times, most successfully in 1978 with Donal Sutherland and Brooke Adams. We have scratched the surface of the genre. But these are a good start for viewing.

Spirits

Aperol Spritzer with the bright orange hue is a blend of Aperol, sparkling Prosecco, and a dash of soda. It's a light, delicious cocktail enjoyed at weddings, brunches, and afternoon events. With half the alcohol and twice the sweetness of Campari, Aperol is a good starting point for the novice who is learning to enjoy bitters.

Bitters, including Campari and Aperol, can be easily found at all your favorite Valley wine and spirits shops. Go pick up a bottle or two! We can expect many more hot, sunny days to come as 2026 unfolds. The fun never stops. Cheers!

By Stephen Phenow



War Machine on Netflix - Popcorn at its best

Given my profession as a military writer / entertainment journalist, I love war movies. When my fellow critics and I get together to discuss war films/TV series they are totally at sea when it comes to military hardware. They are more interested in the show structure, directors, Dir. Photography etc. War movies run on pretty straight parameters. If it isn't a satire, it is pretty much a Ten lil' Indians story. These follow a group of soldiers, or aviators slowly being eliminated one by one usually after heroic deeds. Director Patrick Hughes' (Expendables 3) show was the later. His 'War Machine' with a star cast of Alan Ritchson, Dennis Quaid, and Esai Morales, follows a US Army Ranger selection training a process from induction to their final mission. (Rangers are the Army's equivalent of Navy SEALs.)

Ritchson's character, a staff sarge, 42 years old, is the presumed war machine. This age is the oldest for Ranger selection, and if he fails there are no more chances. Ritchson as the protagonist, is only identified as 81, (Ranger selection only uses numbers, to keep the enemy from knowing names of Rangers to keep their families from being targeted,) a "war machine" because of his stoicism and extreme dedication to honoring his brother's death in Afghanistan by completing his Ranger training, and then story would predictably see him process his trauma and learn how live with grief by becoming a leader again. Except...It turns into Jack Reacher vs a giant freaking robot! The film becomes "Predator"!

The two movies are similar. They start as familiar military dramas. "Predator" (1987) starts as a Special Operations Group (SOG) rescue team lead by Arnold Schwarzenegger with the late Carl Weathers, trying to save captured US politicians in a Central American jungle – but things go off the rails when the soldiers find themselves in a struggle with a camouflaged extraterrestrial armed with advanced technology and a blood-thirsty enjoyment of hunting humans. Over the last 30-odd years, it has come to be regarded a classic of '80s action cinema.

In Hughes' "War Machine," the audience is tricked into thinking this is a straight forward war film, where soldiers bond during training before going on an operation. Since Alan Ritchson's brother (Jai Courtney) dies in the first scene from a Taliban rocket attack and Ritchson fails to save him, we do go down a familiar war movie plot. The movie continues along a predictable path, the only glitch is an asteroid passing near earth and breaking up, in a news story seen by Ritchson.

Continuing this story path, Ritchson now named '81' runs afoul of the two veteran Drill Instructors (Quaid and Morales) who want to force him to DOR out of the program which he refuses. At last the remaining 16 candidates, 15 men and one tough woman (Alex King) enter into the final part of their trial for selection, something called the Death March. The team leader (Stephan James) and his XO, Ritchson, are commanding two 8 man teams. They will be inserted into the mountain forests with no real weapons, other than explosives. Their rifles are for show, and they

are to penetrate enemy defenses (Ranger Cadres 1-4) and destroy an American top secret weapon, and egress to a pick-up point before the cadres can capture them. Except they don't find the broken down jet body representing the team's target. Due to a navigation error they run into the real War Machine; an alien designed hunter killer.

Looking much like REX from the video game "Metal Gear Solid" War Machine is bi pedal (fancy word for two legged, See Pic) armed with pair of Magnetic Repulsion weapons, throwing a solid pencil sized bolt of metal at 1,480 ft. per second and also armed with deployable "bombies" - base ball sized mines- able to be pushed into the air using the same energy. It's 20' high, ten feet wide and uses sophisticated tracking and targeting software packages. Think of a metal T-Rex in size.

Assuming this sophisticated weapon system is their objective, the demolition team uses explosives, when detonated has no effect the WM's armor. Efficiently, the machine kills the team in gory fashion, then detecting the rest of the hiding Rangers (sophisticated targeting package remember?) trains its weaponry on them. The team bugs out running down the slope through the woods, improbably the bolts pass over them as they drop below the machine's sight line. No matter, WM tosses bombs, dropping them in front of routing Rangers. The survivors slip and fall, down to edge of a cliff. They have survived their first encounter with War Machine though out the 16 members only seven are left. Ritchson takes stock. Their radio, gone. Their weapons are loaded with blanks, useless, and the team leader (James) is badly hurt. Now '81' hears the crashing and splintering of trees above. No question. The machine is hunting them.

The target audience are those who expect things to have a high chance of exploding at any moment. As soldiers are hit by the high velocity metal bolts, there's real blood and guts with body parts all around. It's now a summer popcorn movie, men vs a smart machine. Will they outwit it and survive?

Hughes' proven talents with practical stunts and effects were utilized throughout film. Shot on location in forested Victoria, and New Zealand's South Island, the Rangers are clearly running through a real locations gorgeous with trees, valleys and rocky formations in wide shots. There are several eyepopping sequences that involve crossing a rushing river as the machine catches up with them. There is no CGI here just a real wet NZ location that seems impossible to cross to safely. And it works.

Currently, Netflix biggest draw, is Ritchson, whose Jack Reacher action series has cemented his appeal as a hulking strongman with charm and brains. Hughes has built War Machine specifically to match the actor's physicality, yet unlike Schwarzenegger's talent for 1-liners, fails to highlight any humor. And that's my biggest nitpick with this film.

For all the amazing sequences and stuntwork, an rugged locations, story and characters are lacking, and with humor, is a crime. Military men who depend on each other in combat release tension through banter, cliched true, but this movie needed some personality supplied by humor. Even the final confrontation between '81' and the machine is soulless, '81' exploits a cooling weakness on the machine an example that his brother once showed him on a HUMVEE. "War Machine" deserved better. But as a Netflix's mindless summer treat, it hits the spot.

"War Machine" is another in a long line of space invasion movies and TV shows These been produced since the earliest days of film. In 1916, a Danish film about a passing comet causing chaos and terror on Earth, was extraterrestrial origin, and was advertised in "Verdnes ende" (The End of the World.)

Space aliens want to conquer humans, either enslave the world, or consume humanity's precious resources, laying waste to the entire surface of the planet eliminating its inhabitants.

Early '50s films that are excellent examples of the genre are:

'The Day the Earth Stood Still' (1951)

'The Day the Earth Stood Still' is still a landmark in science fiction cinema and the first modern alien invasion movie.

This film tells the story of an alien visitor named Klaatu (Michael Rennie) who arrives on Earth with a powerful robot named Gort, carrying a message of peace and warning against the dangers of humanity's growing nuclear capabilities. Rennie's portrayal of Klaatu and the film's iconic phrase, "Klaatu barada nikto," have become famous as an example of the genre. The film was engrossing examination of the anxieties and tensions of the Cold War era, but it was the forerunner on the concept of the necessity of international cooperation.

'The War of the Worlds' (1953)

Surprisingly, it took over fifty years for Orsen Well's radio show, 'The War of the Worlds' to be made into a film. In adapting the H.G Well's novel, the tripods were replaced. Audiences instead were held spellbound by the sight of Martian killing machines floating above the earth, killing off mankind. Does it hold up well? Not really. Is it fun to watch? Definitely! A summer popcorn movie in vein of 'Independence Day' the long wait was worth it as was the production's special effects (which won the

Academy Award for Visual Effects in 1953) which helped make this one of the great sci-fi films from the 1950s. Produced by George Pal and directed by Byron Haskin, this film set a very high standard for every alien invasion film that followed.

'Invaders from Mars' (1953)

For decades, Mars has been a favorite movie setting and origin for alien invasions. H. G Wells story had a lot to do with that, and Hollywood used Martians as heavies with films like 1953's 'Invaders from Mars' Since director William Cameron Menzies was first and foremost a production and art designer, the low budget film benefits from his skillful use of color and lighting. The story is about a Martian force taking over the minds of townsfolk to prepare for the later invasion, preyed on Cold War fears of communist infiltrators as Menzies utilized the flying saucer panic that was peaking about the same time.

'It Came from Outer Space' (1953)

The sci-fi horror film 'It Came from Outer Space' was Universal-International's first-ever 3D feature, and though it's a pretty dated picture in many areas, nevertheless it's underrated. The story finds a spaceship from another world crashing in the Arizona desert. Only an amateur stargazer and a schoolteacher suspect alien influence when the local townsfolk begin to act strangely. Though it was a sci-fi B-picture from Hollywood's Golden Age, it is no ordinary alien invasion film. We'll call it pulpy but effective entertainment with a timely message.

'Invasion of the Body Snatchers' (1956)

Alien spores drift to Earth from space, landing in a quiet Californian town and growing into seed pods. At first, no one notices anything amiss, but then locals start claiming their family

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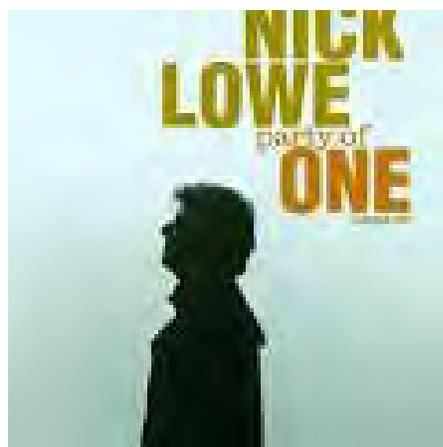
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Nick Lowe's recent stellar show at the Bellwether downtown was a knockout, reminding his fans how strong the Englishman has always been. He stayed at the Sportsmen's Lodge in Studio City when he recorded his 1990 album in Sherman Oaks. Every morning when Lowe went to the hotel restaurant alone, the maitre'd would ask him on seating, "Party of one?" Lowe loved it so much that the album, on Reprise, got named Party of One. A classic. Sad that the Sportsmen's Lodge Hotel will be torn and replaced with apartments, another piece of our history soon to be gone.



Rumor has it that The Webb All Stars will release a record on the super high end audiophile label, Impex Records, later this year. Webb has played sax on over 150 recordings with top jazz artists like Horace Silver, Freddie Hubbard, and Stanley Clarke, he has also recorded music for movies and television programs, including Lisa Simpson's saxophone performances in *The Simpsons*. The band also features Danny Carey from Tool on drums, Jimmy Earl on bass, Mitch Forman on keys, and Jamie Kime on guitar. They will be playing at the Baked Potato in Studio City on Tuesday night,



April 28, a special guest or two is expected for this intimate show. No need to eat beforehand, the famous house baked potatoes are very filling.

Don't forget the Encino Food & Wine Festival presented by ONEgeneration on Saturday, April 25.

See you there.

All day cafe, Highly Likely, will be opening their 4th location in Studio City, on the site that was formerly Lemonade. Judging from their wildly popular restaurants in West Adams, Highland Park and Ojai, the Studio City location will be a fave new hangout for the neighborhood.



BENTLEY'S BEAT

By Bill Bentley

Peter Case

AT McCABE'S: MY LIFE TO LIVE.

In his own totally idiosyncratic manner, Peter Case has become an American hero. He started playing a mess of struggling blues when he was young, because that's the sound that first hit his monkey nerve. Then he eased into the rock & roll waters with the Plimsouls, but then slowly made his way back to the blues. His blues. But this time the man wrote nearly all his own songs, and didn't apologize to anyone. Case rolled and tumbled for years, and found a beautiful attack on the music at the very heartbeat of America. Give him an acoustic guitar and harmonica and Peter Case can take a listener to the outer limits and back. He's got the magic in his guitar. When he writes a song like "If I Go Crazy," the man is not kidding. His blooming beatnik side takes over and there is no stopping him. Case has set his chickens free and there is no going back now. The scene of recording at McCabe's and near the landside edge of Santa Monica, California has been a hunting ground for stellar live music for 70-something years, and actually was the spot where Ry Cooder used to give guitar lessons to students when he was still in junior high. That's McCabe's. And the way Peter Case is able to play to the spirits in the small room of this vaulted guitar store frees the spirit of the sounds. So if it's a little juju you need in your life, head right here. There's even a knocked-out take on John Coltrane's classic "Naima," just in case it's needed. You can't miss.

Mike Finnigan MIKE FINNIGAN.

This music will hit the monkey nerve full on

and put a new glide in the stride when the new album opens up on the airwaves. That's because Mike Finnigan is someone who paid honor to the blues and soul music the entire time he was breathing on the planet or not playing basketball. Which he did with massive finesse, but eventually chose music over sports to take on full-time. Lucky for listeners, that's for sure. This entire album goes to the top of the list for one of the best records of 2026. He grabbed on blues young, and played it for the next 60 years. Non-stop. There might have been detours into recording with Jimi Hendrix on *ELECTRIC LADYLAND*, and playing with artists like Bonnie Raitt and others for years. But Finnigan always came back to his blues. That's where his heart lived. And for this last album he went for broke, discovering classic songs, covering the very best of the blues playlists and making sure every single musician on the album was exactly the right one. And they had the right songs to really show what they could do. There hasn't been an album quite like this for awhile, and producer JJ Blair went the distance to bring everything together. Going down the list of musicians and singers here is a walk on the wonderful side, starting with Smokey Robinson. And every note and beat that comes after feels like it was meant specifically to fit in these recordings. It's really a new wonder of life, and one everyone should hear. Say amen somebody.

Charles Ruggiero

PLAYS MONK LIVE! AT THE BAKED POTATO.

There is hardly any music more exciting than jazz when it is played live in a small club. The walls start shivering a bit, and the people there become more alive. It really does often feel like magic. So when drummer Charles

Ruggiero brings his players Bob Reynolds and Mike Gurrola into the Baked Potato in North Hollywood for a night of intense listening, there isn't much that can be better. Maybe that's because Ruggiero has a tight relationship with his drum kit, and knows just how to pull free the unbeatable sound of sticks on skin and cymbals. It's a gift that has to be cared for with real intensity, and that's exactly what this man does. And it does not hurt that the outfit is playing the songs of Thelonious Monk, some of the best originals known to man. Saxophonist Reynolds and bassist Gurrola have the beautiful talents to get inside these songs with Ruggiero's metric majesty and just let things swing. Beginning with "Monk's Dream" is the perfect kick-off to a set of freedom. No one had that feel like Monk, one which makes the world seem like a friendly place. As things intensify and the drums start to feel like a living entity, the bass and saxophone wrap their arms around the beating heart of "Let's Cool One" and "Evidence" like only the great musicians can create. There is no doubt this outfit is reaching for the stars tonight. And finishing with "Green Chimneys" and "Misteriosos" is swiging in essence. Jazz is a music that makes the audience feel alive, and these three musicians are the perfect ones to deliver the goods. Come back soon.

Bill Frisell

IN MY DREAMS. Talk about a musician of many colors: guitarist Bill Frisell practically invented the box of big crayolas. His wave of weaving so many elements and sounds together is right there with being a magician, and in such a long and varied career he should be given a plaque by the Amoeba Records stores for EIA (Eclecticism in Action). He's that eclectic. And while there are certain basics of jazz guitar in the man's DNA, there is never a sense

that he's charging Jazz Hill in his soul. Instead, it's just another strain in the veins. Frisell is really a person who digs messing with the rules. It's obvious from his forever moving career that he doesn't want to get pinned to any one thing. Instead there are all kinds of sounds veering through his original songs, and those he chooses to attack. From well-known classics like "Hard Times" and "Give Me a Bone" to Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn's "Isfahan." The mind swirls just grokking all that is here. And it goes without saying that the band onboard during this journey is of the utmost abilities to play it all. It's in their DNA. So the next time an audio excursion seems in the cards, track this album down. IN MY DREAMS belongs securely placed in the mental plate above the forehead. It is springtime!

The Blasters

RARE BLASTS: Studio Outtakes and Movie Music 1979-1985

If ever there was an American band who devoted their trade to digging into the music of the United States that they loved best and never turned around the Blasters were it. The Downey, California aggregation came together in the late 1970s and never looked back. The Blasters invaded their locale like an armed outfit hell bent on taking their love of American music and spreading it into every spot they could. And when they went national and even made their music for the silver screen it seemed like the world was splitting open. This collection of songs from that time now sounds like something made in another universe, and meant to turn new listeners into rabid rebels. To a large extent that's exactly what the Blasters did. And as their songs expanded along with their popularity, it was like watching life itself grow stronger as these sounds began finding their footing. America came alive.

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