

LAGUNA BEACH

MARCH 2015 » OCINSITE.COM

Magazine

+

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ARCHIVES
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DESIGN HISTORY

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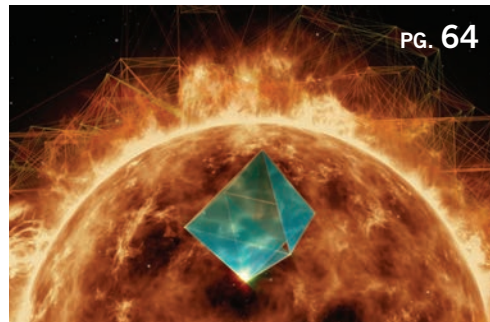


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COURTESY OF SHELDON HARTE



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PHOTOGRAPHER:
JODY TIONGCO



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JODY TIONGCO

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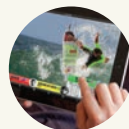
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MY DEAR FRIENDS

I'M SOMEWHAT EMBARRASSED TO ADMIT THAT I, LIKE MANY of my peers who grew up in the MTV generation, was a fan of the artist Patrick Nagel. With new wave music, Duran Duran and art deco-esque depictions of the female form with classic 1980s hairstyles, what's not to like?

As a senior in high school, that was all I knew. And it hadn't occurred to me, then, to look further. But I've lived a lot of life since then—I've traveled, met people and I've learned to appreciate myriad forms of art, cultures and beliefs very different from that of my SoCal roots.

Subjectivity, individuality, self-expression ... that's what makes life interesting and unpredictable. Your 18-year-old self may be very different from your 40-year-old self, and your two best friends might be complete opposites. It's hard to say why one prefers certain music genres, fashion styles, movies or personalities over others, but that's simply our human nature: individualistic.

We even tend to rate everything and try to explain how much we like certain things over others. From the "best of" this to the "top 10" that, we are all drawn to lists and seem to possess an innate desire to classify, categorize and organize things in a way that makes it easier for us to process.

The Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences ranks the best movies every year and the NCAA ranks college basketball teams when they set the brackets for March Madness. Who's to say that "Birdman" is better than "Boyhood" or that Murray State should be a 12 seed while Indiana is a 10 seed?

We also rank things without knowing it. I recently teased one of my buddies for saying she was having some of her "dear friends" over for a visit. Obviously these "dear friends" must be a notch above her regular, run-of-the-mill friends. I asked what exactly was the tipping point that turned regular friends in to dear ones—she did not appreciate my questioning and thought I was joking. I'm not sure where I rank in her social order, and I probably shouldn't ask because I was only half-joking.

Whether it's a committee of collective opinions or a sole decider, people are subjective. Everyone has singular tastes and we all see the world differently. And that's OK.

This issue of Laguna Beach Magazine is illustrative of this. Inside, we look at subjects ranging from homegrown artisans and Laguna's varied architectural styles, to charcuterie trends and the digital art movement—each of which is presented for your enjoyment and your unique perspective.

Steve Zepezauer
Founding Publisher & Editorial Director



Duran Duran album cover by artist Patrick Nagel

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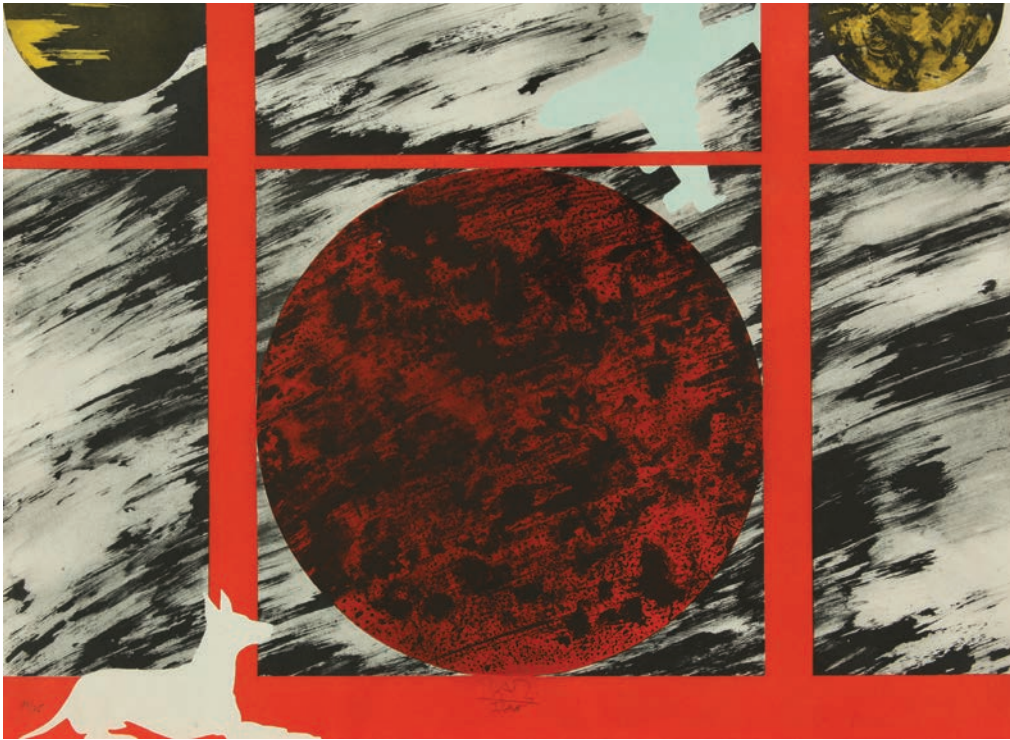
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calendar *of* events

ART | ACTIVITIES | ENTERTAINMENT

MARCH 2015

COURTESY OF LAGUNA ART MUSEUM



Untitled etching on Guarro paper by Billy Al Bengston (1988)

“IN BARCELONA: A PORTFOLIO OF PRINTS BY EIGHT LOS ANGELES ARTISTS” THROUGH MAY 31; LAGUNA ART MUSEUM

A complete collection of 16 prints, the Barcelona Portfolio was gifted to the museum by Ed Moses and family. The unique exhibit is the result of trips to Barcelona taken by Ed and seven other artists between 1988 and 1989. Each artist's two-week stay included the creation of print works at the famed Spanish print workshop, Polígrafa Obra Gráfica, which played a large part in the growth of the print medium in the late 20th century. (949-494-8971; lagunaartmuseum.org)

ART

“SELECTIONS: DIETER ROTH'S PICCADILLIES” THROUGH MAY 24; ORANGE COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART

Known in the 1960s for his artist books and sculptures made of cheese, chocolate and other food, Swiss artist Dieter Roth began to experiment with enlarged prints of some Piccadilly Circus postcards. He distorted and reinterpreted the images by overlaying silk-screened surfaces on top, creating one of his most celebrated series. Some of these pieces are displayed in the exhibit. (949-759-1122; ocma.net)

“CALIFORNIA PRINTMAKERS, 1950-2000” THROUGH MAY 31; LAGUNA ART MUSEUM

Celebrating the works of 20th-century California printmakers such as Wayne Thiebaud, Ed Ruscha and David Hockney, this exhibit serves as a brief introduction to different types of prints—from lithographs to screen prints and etchings—and includes a glossary of terms for those unfamiliar with the style. Works in the exhibit come from the museum's own holdings as well as local private collections. (949-494-8971; lagunaartmuseum.org)

ENTERTAINMENT

LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA MARCH 28; SEGERSTROM CENTER FOR THE ARTS, COSTA MESA

London's oldest symphony orchestra makes its way across the pond to perform at the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall for one afternoon only. A part of the Donna L. Kendall Classical Series, the show includes a pre-concert conversation with Grammy Award-winning conductor Michael Tilson Thomas and the symphony's principal flute player, Gareth Davies. World-renowned pianist Yuja Wang will accompany the symphony as its featured artist. (714-556-2787; scfta.org)

“THE SECOND CITY'S 55TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR”

MARCH 31 - APRIL 4; LAGUNA PLAYHOUSE

One of the most well-respected improv theaters in the country, The Second City first opened its doors in 1959 and has seen the likes of Dan Aykroyd, Gilda Radner and Tina Fey pass through its doors. Now celebrating 55 years in operation, its traveling troupe is making a brief stop in Laguna Beach to tickle our funny bones with its world-renowned sketches and improv. (949-497-2787; lagunaplayhouse.com)

“THE ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER” APRIL 10-19; LAGUNA PLAYHOUSE

Adapted from the beloved Mark Twain novel, “The Adventures of Tom Sawyer” tells the story of the trouble-making Tom as he treasure hunts with his friend Huckleberry Finn, attempts to earn the affections of Becky Thatcher, witnesses a murder and eventually attends his own funeral. Filled with laughs and suspense, this Laguna Playhouse Youth Theatre production offers the audience a new way to appreciate a classic story. (949-497-2787; lagunaplayhouse.com)

“GUYS AND DOLLS”

APRIL 14-19; SEGERSTROM CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Gather the whole family and be transported back to Depression-era New York, where the

city's small-time gamblers attempt to make a fortune and find love. A long-beloved musical comedy, "Guys and Dolls" encourages toe-tapping to hit songs such as "A Bushel and a Peck" and "Luck Be a Lady," while the main characters struggle to balance their love of the game of craps with the loves of their lives. (714-556-2787; scfta.org)

UPCOMING CONCERTS

ONGOING; THE COACH HOUSE, SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO

Talented performers take the stage at The Coach House this March: Tommy Castro and The Painkillers (March 15); Dick Dale (March 21); and Johnny Lang (March 27). Visit the venue's website for more concerts taking place this spring. (949-496-8930; thecoachhouse.com)

COMMUNITY EVENTS

SAGE HILL SCHOOL MULTICULTURAL FAIR MARCH 21; SAGE HILL SCHOOL, NEWPORT COAST

Once again, the parents and students of Sage Hill School invite one and all to experience and celebrate the beauty of culture. The events include an international marketplace, more than 20 global food booths, entertainment and a display of artwork by Sage Hill students, faculty and parents. There are also plenty of activities for the kids, including origami, butter churning and storytelling. Overflow parking is available at Mariners Church with a

complimentary shuttle to the school. (949-219-0100; sagehillsschool.org)

BLUE WATER MUSIC FESTIVAL

MARCH 28-29; SAWDUST ART FESTIVAL GROUNDS

The Sawdust Art Festival grounds are transformed into a music lover's dream as dozens of bands, artists and vendors gather with the goal of uniting art, music and community for the 11th annual Blue Water Music Festival. The weekend includes performances by Smash Mouth, Brett Dennen, Allen Stone, Bushwalla, Rebel Rockers, Common Sense, PawnShop Kings, Pato Banton and more. In addition, a chef's showcase allows local culinary artists to share their tempting and sustainable creations with attendees. All proceeds from the silent auction benefit the Blue Water Green Earth organization. (bluwatermusicfestival.org)

THE 19TH ANNUAL VALIANT WOMEN LUNCHEON

APRIL 24; THE ST. REGIS MONARCH BEACH, DANA POINT

The Valiant Women program at Mission Hospital supports quality healthcare for women of all ages. Their annual luncheon includes a fashion show starring Mission Hospital's very own nurses and physicians and a silent auction, proceeds of which go toward funding women's services at Mission Hospital. (949-364-7783; missionfoundationevents.com) LBM



The 19th annual Valiant Women Luncheon will feature a fashion show and silent auction on April 24.

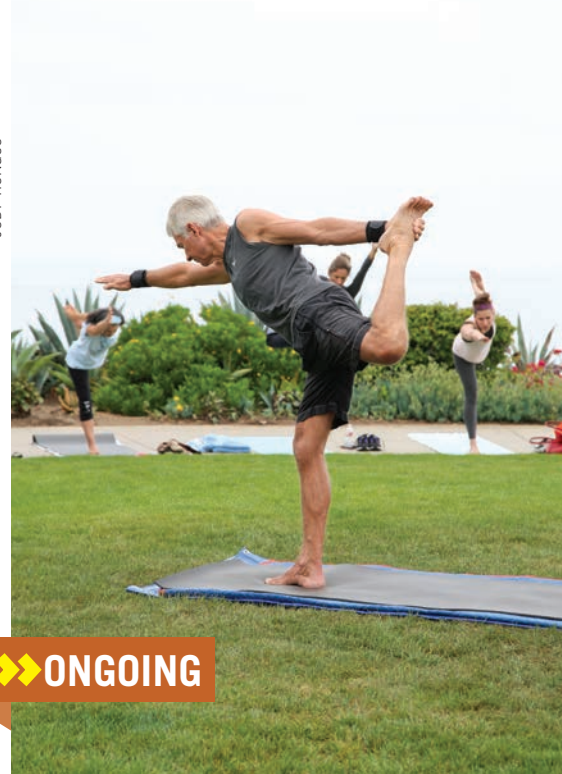
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JODY TIONGCO



▶▶▶ ONGOING

Free yoga at Treasure Island Park

FIRST THURSDAYS ART WALK:

First Thursday of the month, 6-9 p.m.
(firstthursdaysartwalk.com)

FREE YOGA IN THE PARK:

Monday-Thursday, Saturdays, 8 a.m.;
Treasure Island Park (949-494-9928;
yogainthepark.blogspot.com)

LAGUNA BEACH FARMERS MARKET:

Saturdays, 8 a.m. to noon; Forest Avenue
and Laguna Canyon Road

LAGUNA LAUGHTER YOGA:

Sunday-Friday, 8 a.m., Saturdays, 10 a.m.;
Main Beach (lyinstitute.org)

LIVE! AT THE MUSEUM:

Second Thursday of the month, 7-8 p.m.;
Laguna Art Museum (949-494-8971;
lagunaartmuseum.org)

MONTHLY WINE TASTING PARTY:

First Friday of the month, 6-9 p.m.;
Laguna Canyon Winery (949-715-9463;
lagunacanyonwinery.com)

NATURE HIKES:

Various dates and times, Laguna
Canyon Foundation (949-497-8324;
lagunacanyon.org)

SAWDUST STUDIO ART CLASSES:

Various dates and times; Sawdust Art
Festival grounds (949-494-3030;
sawdustartfestival.org)

ZEROTRASH BEACH CLEANUP:

First Saturday of the month, 10 a.m. to noon,
various locations (zerotrash.org/laguna)

UP FRONT | AROUND TOWN

PLACES | PERSPECTIVES | HAPPENINGS



Locals receive discounts and other perks by joining Pacific Edge Hotel's Bungalow Beach Club.

JOIN THE CLUB

As if residents needed another reason to love living in this oceanfront city, Pacific Edge Hotel has added one more incentive by introducing its locals-only Bungalow Beach Club. Members receive exclusive perks such as VIP discounted access to the property's private beachfront bungalows, 20 percent off hotel bookings and reduced rates when reserving five or more rooms. Other advantages of joining the club include five or 10 free bungalow reservations per year—based on the selected membership level—as well as complimentary valet parking, Wi-Fi access, unlimited nonalcoholic drinks in bungalow minibars and a discount for on-property food and beverages. (pacifiedgehotel.com) —*Sharon Stello*

BEVERAGE BUSINESS BLASTS OFF

Laguna Beach-based XS Energy Drink has been acquired by Amway, an \$11.8 billion direct-selling business headquartered in Michigan. Amway has served as the exclusive distributor of XS since 2003; during that time, the beverage brand has grown to \$150 million in sales each year and is now in 38 markets around the globe. The brand behind the B vitamin-filled, sugar-free energy drinks—in flavors from wild berry to root beer—was co-founded by David Vanderveen, who joins Amway as vice president and general manager for the XS brand as part of the deal announced in January. David says there are plans to develop a hotel partnership and physical presence in Laguna. As David says, “XS is all about experiencing the Laguna Beach lifestyle wherever people happen to be.” (xsblast.com) —S.S.



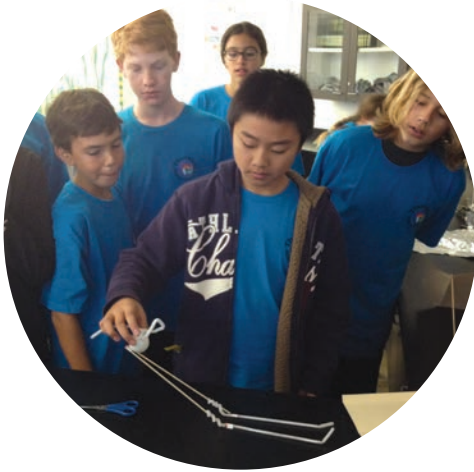
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Laguna Art Museum received David Cassidy photos by Andy Warhol.

SNAPSHOT OF THE PAST

Laguna Art Museum gained a piece of pop art history when it received Little Red Book No. 282, containing six Polaroid photographs of actor-singer David Cassidy, from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts in late 2014. The donation was part of the last major wave of one of the largest art giveaways ever by an artist-endowed foundation. The full collection of Little Red Books feature myriad Polaroid photos taken and assembled into albums by Andy before he died in 1987. These pictures portray a wide range of subjects, including many of the artist's well-known friends and associates. Our local museum was among 322 institutions across 48 states to benefit from the generous foundation's final round of gifts—more than 14,000 pieces—many of which have never been shown in public displays before. However, Laguna art fans will have to wait patiently, as there are no immediate plans to exhibit the Little Red Book donation. (lagunaartmuseum.org) —S.S.



OPERATION COLLABORATION

Aiming to improve creativity, collaboration and critical-thinking skills, local children are putting their heads together to tackle fun tasks in science, technology, engineering, math and the arts. The nonprofit Destination Imagination is helping train students of all ages to become future innovators and leaders. Squads of up to seven kids receive instant challenges that require quick thinking and teamwork, such as building a contraption out of pencils, marshmallows, card stock and Styrofoam cups in only a few minutes in order to get a pingpong ball to roll down ramps into a bucket. Other open-ended assignments, like inventing a fairy tale or constructing a sound machine, are prepared ahead of time and presented at competitions.

Thurston Middle School and Top of the World each have contending teams this year. After practicing problem-solving scenarios at weekly meetings and a Creativity Carnival at Thurston in January, students headed to a regional tournament. Three Thurston teams and one from Top of the World will compete at the state level on March 28. The top groups move on to a global final this May in Knoxville, Tenn. —S.S.



Children can collect coins to help seals and sea lions recovering at the Pacific Marine Mammal Center.

PENNIES FOR PINNIPEDS

Local students have the chance to help our flippered friends recover at the Pacific Marine Mammal Center during the fourth annual Change the Life of a Seal campaign, running through May 15. For this program, schoolchildren donate spare change to assist the center in its efforts to care for sick and injured seals and sea lions. Last year, those quarters, nickels, dimes and pennies added up to more than \$11,000, contributed by over 2,000 students in the area. Kids can dig into their piggy banks, collect coins from family, friends and neighbors, or organize fundraisers like bake sales or car washes. In addition to gaining valuable lessons in philanthropy, students who raise the most money are awarded prizes from stuffed animals to key chains. The grand prize for the top-earning class includes a tour of the PMMC and an invitation to witness the release of a healed seal back into the wild. (pacificmmc.org) —S.S.

NEW TO THE RANKS

Two new officers have joined the ranks of the Laguna Beach Police Department, adding to the cadre that helps keep the community safe. Michele Maraj and Jordan Mirakian were hired in January and expect to go through 23 weeks of field training before starting their roles in the patrol division. Michele previously worked as a police officer for four years in Fairfax, Va., and has a bachelor's degree in social science. Jordan, who earned an associate degree in administration of justice, was a police officer for 15 years at San Diego Community College District and San Diego State University. Michele and Jordan were hired to replace officers who had retired or left for other positions; they bring the department up to 46 officers, with three positions that still need to be filled. —S.S.



New Laguna police officers Jordan Mirakian (left) and Michele Maraj

PARENTING A TEEN IS TOUGH IN TODAY'S ENVIRONMENT. WE CAN HELP.



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HOLLYWOOD HITS LAGUNA

Veteran actor Joe Mantegna is making an early visit to Laguna this year. A fan of the Pageant of the Masters and regular attendee, he's more than familiar with our community—and on April 12, he's joining fellow art lovers at the ninth annual Art Star Awards at seven-degrees to deliver the keynote speech. According to the Laguna Beach Alliance for the Arts, Joe is expected to share stories about his career, which includes lead roles in TV shows such as "Criminal Minds" and work in films like "Searching for Bobby Fischer" and "The Godfather: Part III."

Also taking place at the event, awards in seven categories are bestowed upon organizations, businesses and individuals who have made an impact on Laguna's arts and culture scene. Last year's \$5,000 Inspiration Grant winner, Cheryl Ekstrom, is scheduled to present her resulting project: Broken/Unbroken/Broken, a series of mixed-media sculptures representing life's journeys. (lagunabeacharts.com) —Allison Hata



Joe
Mantegna

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— Daniel Dinh

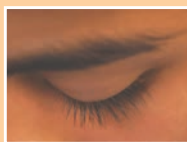
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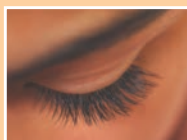
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MARKET MAKEOVER



Haggen, the Northwest's largest independent grocer, has acquired several Albertsons stores, including one in Laguna slated for conversion in late March.

Laguna will soon get a new grocery store when the Albertsons on South Coast Highway converts to Haggen, a Washington-based chain, early this year. Haggen entered into an agreement in December to acquire 146 stores in the West, approved by the Federal Trade Commission in late January. The Laguna store is expected to be closed for conversion starting March 22, with a reopening slated for March 25. The Northwest's largest independent grocer, Haggen supports regional farms, ranches, fisheries and other businesses to bolster a sustainable local food economy. Interestingly, in 1989 it became the first in the country to add an in-store Starbucks coffee kiosk. The recent acquisition is part of Haggen's expansion from 18 locations to 164. (haggen.com) —S.S.



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JODY TIONGCO



AN ANNIVERSARY AND AWARD

Laguna Beach Seniors, one of the oldest senior service nonprofits in Orange County, turns 40 this year. Just in time for the anniversary, it was recently named the 2014 nonprofit of the year at the Laguna Beach Chamber of Commerce's annual Spirit of Laguna awards, which acknowledges businesses, organizations and people that have made "extraordinary contributions to our community." The nonprofit has been based out of the Susi Q Senior Center since 2009 and aims to enhance the lives of seniors through a variety of programs and services. While the activities are created around the needs and interests of those over age 50, everyone is welcome to attend. (lagunabeachseniors.com) —*Katherine Duncan*



DURING THE PAST THREE YEARS, THE POLICE DEPARTMENT HAS INVESTIGATED THREE FATAL AND 65 INJURY-CAUSING COLLISIONS INVOLVING PEDESTRIANS IN LAGUNA BEACH. IN JANUARY, IT ANNOUNCED THAT IT WOULD BE STEPPING UP PEDESTRIAN SAFETY EFFORTS, PAYING SPECIAL ATTENTION TO TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS IN AREAS WHERE THE ACCIDENTS HAVE OCCURRED.

BACK AT THE RANCH

The Ranch at Laguna Beach's proposed expansion and renovation got the green light from the California Coastal Commission in January. Plans were approved by the city last year, but a resident appealed to the coastal agency over concerns about potential environmental impacts, loss of affordable hotel rooms and limiting public access to recreation land. The commission approved a coastal development permit for the project with some conditions: a trail must be designed from the property to the coast and the Scout Camp must be set aside for underprivileged children and other groups at least 12 times per year. Plans include adding hotel rooms; building a new spa, fitness center and employee lounge; reconfiguring the restaurant; and creating an outdoor event center. The hotel will be expanded from 64 units to 97 by splitting 32 oversized rooms in half and turning a former residence into a penthouse suite. (theranchlb.com) —*S.S. LBM*



COURTESY OF LB INDY

Mark Christy heads a group that owns and plans to renovate The Ranch at Laguna Beach.



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COMMUNITY

LUMBERYARD CHEF CHALLENGE

1 Chris Herzfeld, Laguna Beach High School; Jenny Salberg, Thurston Middle School; Michael Conlon, Top of the World Elementary School; Chris Duddy, El Morro Elementary School **2** Tiffany Moran, Samantha Washer, Erin Decker, Kristin Winter **3** Beth and Mitch Kruger, Tammy and Marcus Skenderian **4** Armando Ortega, Robin Rounaghi, Cary and Suzanne Redfearn, Tom Motherway **5** Tom Motherway, Tom Addis **6** Elaine Brashier, Samantha Washer, Kelly Smith, Kendall Clark, Terri Benson, Nancy Jackson, Erin Decker



PHOTOS BY BLUE SKYS STUDIO



The sixth annual Chef Challenge on Jan. 26 pitted four Laguna Beach school principals against one another in a culinary competition in support of SchoolPower. Chris Herzfeld (Laguna Beach High School) and Jenny Salberg (Thurston Middle School) teamed up against Michael Conlon (Top of the World Elementary School) and Chris Duddy (El Morro Elementary School) at Lumberyard restaurant on Forest Avenue. Each team put together a meal to be prepared by chef Armando Ortega, choosing an appetizer, entree and dessert from a predetermined list of dishes. Supporters tasted them all and voted for their favorite combination. The leaders from the elementary schools received the most votes for their picks: prosciutto-wrapped shrimp, polenta with lamb and warm butter cake with mixed-berry compote. The event raised more than \$10,000 for SchoolPower, a nonprofit that funds local public school programs such as performing/visual arts, kindergarten through eighth grade music and foreign language. (lbschoolpower.org) —*Katherine Duncan*

COMMUNITY

ART AUCTION 2015: CALIFORNIA COOL

1 Nelson Coates, Ruben Flores, Monica Francis, Matt Susson **2** Karen Morally, Richard Varner, Sara Heesch, Genny Boccardo-Dubey **3** Danny Heller, Tracy Beckmann **4** Rick Silver, Elizabeth Turk **5** Live auction with Andrea Fiuczynski **6** Lia Skidmore, Michael Zakian **7** Malcolm and Sara Warner, Michael Daniels, Arabella Cant



PHOTOS 1, 3 AND 6 BY ERIC MINH SWENSON; PHOTOS 2, 4, 5 AND 7 BY ERIC STONER

The annual fundraiser, held Feb. 7 at Laguna Art Museum, brought crowds together to view offerings from more than 100 California artists. Works ran the gamut from midcentury modern design to abstract pieces, including a glow box by Peter Alexander valued at \$25,000. Exhibiting artists walked the floor as nearly 400 attendees placed their bids on silent auction items hanging on gallery walls. The live auction in the Steele Gallery had collectors placing bids on 20 works ranging from mixed media to acrylic on canvas. Meanwhile, the California Gallery hosted a culinary setup with sweet and savory small plates from local restaurants, including Tortilla Republic, Slapfish, Wine Gallery and the soon-to-open Urth Caffé. Costa Mesa's Simply Sweet Cakery offered a selection of colorful cake pops, and Tito's Handmade Vodka created signature basil- and rosemary-infused cocktails. Approximately \$300,000—a record amount—was raised to support the nonprofit museum's education and exhibition programs. (lagunaartmuseum.org) —Allison Hata LBM

CHAMPIONS OF CHARCUTERIE

A taste of the Old World is available at local eateries, where dried and cured meats are transformed into a culinary art form.

By Bria Balliet | Photos by Jody Tiongco

COURTESY OF THREE SEVENTY COMMON KITCHEN & DRINK



The meat and cheese board at Three Seventy Common Kitchen & Drink features house-made charcuterie.

FROM THE SMOKED GAME EATEN BY EARLY NATIVE Americans to the salted meats that nourished 15th-century sailors as they spent months at sea, charcuterie has been enjoyed for ages. And though the name is of French origin (derived from the words “chair” meaning flesh, and “cuit” meaning cooked), the category includes bold specialties such as German sausage, Italian salami and Spanish jamon (ham).

In the modern world, dried and cured meats are a trend among local chefs, who take pride in their carefully sourced selections and house-made creations—whether it’s chef Azmin Ghahreman’s imported jamon iberico at Sapphire Pantry or Selanne Steak Tavern’s recipe for venison sausage.

Taking their creativity one step further, each chef also offers some form of homemade accompaniments for their charcuterie boards. The Loft currently provides lavender and jalapeno mustards, while Wine Gallery smokes its own mozzarella, for example. Partner their handiworks with the right wine or whiskey, and you have a recipe for the ultimate party platter.

THREE SEVENTY COMMON

Three Seventy Common Kitchen & Drink chef-owner Ryan Adams likes the exclusivity of creating much of his own charcuterie in the kitchen, as guests won’t be able to find it anywhere else.

The board changes regularly to keep frequent visitors on their toes, but chicken liver pate, porketta (a boneless pork roast), pork cheek and chicken terrine are among the varieties crafted in Ryan’s kitchen. One of the restaurant’s most popular items is the lengua pastrami made from beef tongue, which differs from a typical brisket pastrami with its more velvety texture.

These specialty items are prepared with care, taking anywhere from three days to four weeks to make. The kitchen also creates all accompaniments to its board, from pickles and olive oil crackers that pair well with the porketta to apricot mustard, fig preserves and sour cherry chutney that lend themselves to spicier, domestic salamis.



Sapphire Executive Chef Devin Wells

SAPPHIRE PANTRY

Sourcing dozens of options that include popular jamon serrano, duck prosciutto and wild boar salami, Sapphire Pantry can create custom platters for groups of all sizes—from large gatherings to a couple's beach picnic. Each variety the shop carries has a flavor specific to its origin, including the pricey jamon iberico, which is named after the black Iberian pig that it's made from. "They have to let it dry [for] up to two years," says chef-owner Azmin. This drying time, the type of pig and its acorn-heavy diet all combine to create a dense meat with bold flavor.

As for pairings, Sapphire Pantry is known for its selection of more than 100 cheeses, and Azmin loves the spice of a prosciutto with the creaminess of an Italian cheese. "... At room temperature on a toasted ciabatta with olive oil and pepper, and then you put a piece of prosciutto on it, ... that's heaven," he says.

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Chef de Cuisine Casey Overton offers domestic and imported charcuterie at The Loft at Montage Laguna Beach.

THE LOFT AT MONTAGE LAGUNA BEACH

Chef de Cuisine Casey Overton loves utilizing The Loft's house-made sausages, and not just on his charcuterie board. The menu almost always includes at least one entree that highlights the most recent cured creation, and other variations like lardo (a soft and extremely fatty cut) have been melted down and spread on toast or whipped to a butter-like consistency for use in risotto.

The Loft also carries a wide variety of domestic and imported options like bresola, a bold beef that pairs well with lemon and lavender mustard; duck prosciutto and prosciutto di Parma, an Italian import that boasts a gamier flavor than domestic varieties, work well with a lighter and fruitier pinot noir.

"When I look into pairing something, I look at [either] complementing it or contrasting it," Casey says. He uses country ham and bourbon as an example, as the fiery bite from the whiskey can combat the salty, rich flavor of the ham.



WINE GALLERY

Though chef Josh Mason of Wine Gallery has had to cut back on the amount of drying and curing he does in the restaurant to accommodate space constraints, he still houses a carefully honed selection and puts his own creations on the menu whenever possible. Favorites of Wine Gallery customers are Josh's pork and wild boar pancettas, which he presses for seven days in a seasoning mix. "The wild boar [version] is a lot gamier and a little leaner," the chef shares. "I use the same recipe for both and let the variations in the flavors of the meat shine through."

In addition to its specialty meat boards—which can be served with cheeses, cornichons, mustards or jams—Wine Gallery also uses various sausages, salami and prosciuttos on its pizzas, such as the peppery calabrese salami. "It's very spicy, so we use that in place of pepperoni," Josh explains.

SELANNE STEAK TAVERN

One of the newer restaurants in town, Selanne Steak Tavern also serves a refined variety of venison sausage on its charcuterie board.

"The original recipe is a Selanne family secret that has been in [owner] Teemu's family for many, many years," says Joshua Severson, the restaurant's executive chef. "What makes it so different from traditional venison sausage is that it uses reindeer meat, which comes from wild deer. ... Their meat has a deeper and more robust flavor than domestic deer due to their diets."

When it comes to the robust and gamy taste of venison sausage, a wine that can stand up to stronger foods—such as a bold pinot noir—is a safe bet. However, Joshua emphasizes that pairings are more about personal preference than hard and fast rules.

"The whole idea is to try different meats with an assortment of accouterments to really create a unique flavor profile and determine your own personal preferences," he shares. *LBM*



Selanne Steak Tavern uses an old family recipe to make venison sausage from reindeer meat.

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MIND AND BODY

Jacob Cho brings the technique and discipline of taekwondo's founding fathers to his academy.

Section by Bria Balliet

JACOB CHO, OWNER OF CHO'S ACADEMY ON South Coast Highway, didn't fall into taekwondo by accident—the Korean martial art is in his blood. His father, Grandmaster Hee Il Cho, was one of the highest ranking students of the late General Choi Hong Hi, who is widely considered to be the father of modern taekwondo.

After dedicating himself to his craft, Jacob made it his mission to pass on the values to new generations. "Taekwondo is much more than a sport. ... There is an overall promotion of integrity," he says. "I believe the more we practice these habits and surround ourselves with like-minded people within the academy, the more inclined we are to act this way in our everyday lives."

Here, he shares the benefits of his art and how new practitioners can become masters.

Laguna Beach Magazine: What about the sport made you want to pursue it as your career?

Jacob Cho: My practice as a child was very difficult. It was strict, physically demanding and sparring was rough at times. Now that I'm older and have experienced life, I see more clearly what my father/teacher was doing for me. ... While I grow as a person, so does my appreciation for the martial arts. I continue to practice and teach for good health because it makes me a better person and allows me to impact others in a positive way.

LBM: What separates taekwondo from other martial arts styles?

JC: Taekwondo is popularly known for its variety of kicks, execution of speed and development of power demonstrated by way of breaking wood or cement blocks with kicks and punches. There's also an important emphasis placed on strengthening the mind and character development. ... The sport aspect is a component of the broader martial art. Sport practitioners develop a relatively limited set of techniques and focus primarily on athletic performance.

LBM: What are the biggest benefits?

JC: Physically, practitioners can expect to maintain an overall fit body. Taekwondo



Jacob Cho learned taekwondo from his father and now passes down his knowledge to students at the academy.

develops strength, speed, endurance, flexibility, coordination, agility, balance, motor skills and self-defense skills. Mentally, practitioners can expect to experience many benefits, such as increased levels of confidence, patience, mental toughness, focus, calming of the mind and humbling of the ego. Taekwondo offers us a vehicle to be more closely connected with our inner selves.

LBM: Many people assume beginner classes are for kids—is it ever too late to start?

JC: It's absolutely never too late to start. I currently have adults beginning on a regular basis. Age shouldn't be a deterrent, nor should one's current fitness level.

LBM: What kinds of supplemental workouts do you recommend to complement training?

JC: It depends on the overall goal. I've found yoga to be a great complement to martial arts, sports and life in general. Jujitsu is also a great complement to taekwondo. ... Diet is [also] self-defense and fitness on the most basic of levels.

LBM: What can a newcomer expect in his or her first class?

JC: Newcomers can expect to be greeted warmly, to be treated with respect and to experience classes taught by passionate and knowledgeable teachers. Everyone's first class is always free.



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COURTESY OF SHELDON HARTE

Open shelving (pictured far left) and countertop displays (far right) are great ways to make the most of minimal storage space.

SAVING SPACE

Reduce clutter and boost style with a newly organized home.

By Bria Balliet

LAGUNA'S BEACH BUNGALOWS ARE OFTEN BIG on character but short on square footage. With the new season making its official debut on March 20, embrace the spring cleaning tradition with a permanent solution to clutter: reorganizing to make the most of small areas.

Interior designer Sheldon Harte, whose main office for Harte Brownlee & Associates is on Glenneyre Street, suggests "looking up" as one of the most underestimated ways to achieve this balance of storage and space. "We do what I call seasonal storage, where maybe it's your holiday decorations or maybe it's stuff you only use in the summer," he says.

One way to shift belongings skyward is through open shelving. It's a great approach for those

with nicer flatware or glassware that can be displayed, Sheldon notes. "You gain storage because you're not breaking them up with all those doors and fillers—so those inches [of space] can add up to feet," he explains. In addition, opting for open kitchen shelving means that bulkier items are more likely to fit. For difficult pots and pans, Sheldon says hanging them above a stove or an island gets them out of the way neatly while adding a decorative element to the room.

Meanwhile, countertop displays follow a similar approach. "I have a client that doesn't have a lot of drawer space, so she stores her silverware in vertical ceramic containers," Sheldon shares. "... She makes an arrangement out of it with forks in one of them and knives and spoons in the other."

Smaller abodes can also be made more comfortable by transforming everyday pieces of furniture into dual-purpose items. When Sheldon lived on Diamond Street, he found a way to save space with the placement of his dining room table. "When you opened the front door, my dining table was right there. So I turned the chairs backwards so it looked more like an entry table; ... when I had parties, I took the chairs away and it became like a grazing table," he says.

Ultimately, when it comes to making the most of a house of any size, don't be afraid to break the mold by storing items in less conventional places or using pieces in innovative ways. In the end, the biggest asset to have when organizing a small space is imagination.

MORE TO STORE

Check out the following products to maximize space and storage in some of Laguna's cozier casitas.

A smaller home doesn't have to appear cluttered. By offering mobility in living spaces and pulling double duty as storage and display, these items help organize all of your goods in some unconventional ways. *LBM*



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SPROUTING UP

Launched by a local nonprofit, the Seeds Library helps get gardens growing.

By Katherine Duncan | Photos by Jody Tiongco



Seeds Arts and Education President Liesa Schimmelpfennig launched the Seeds Library late last year (pictured with Anneliese School gardening teacher Greg Johansen).

WHEN APPROACHING THE SEEDS LIBRARY AT Anneliese School in Laguna Canyon, you're greeted by three little horses. The trio is primarily there to interact with the children, but they also serve another important function: creating nutrient-rich compost for the garden, which contributes seeds to the library. The entire space is designed to support the cycle of nature, from utilizing waste to supplement the soil, to cooking with the freshly harvested produce in the outdoor kitchen.

The library is just the latest addition, developed by the nonprofit Seeds Arts and Education in November 2014 to benefit the local ecosystem and connect the Laguna Beach community. It operates on an honor system—anyone may contribute or borrow seeds for free (by appointment only, for now). We spoke with Seeds President Liesa Schimmelpfennig and Anneliese School gardening teacher Greg Johansen about how to get involved, as well as best practices for springtime gardening.

Laguna Beach Magazine: What inspired you to create the Seeds Library?

Liesa Schimmelpfennig: The inspiration came from a large-scale seed swap that I attended about five years ago in Claremont. It was filled with people representing the seeds that they created from their own harvests. ... I think the feeling was that we're making a miniscule contribution to the health of our ecosystem by endorsing, supporting, seed swapping—because that's the essence of life, seeds. And in light of

the GMO movement, these seeds events—even if they start very small, such as the one that we launched—... [are] the beginning, and you have to start somewhere.

LBM: What is the process for harvesting seeds so that they can be donated?

LS: Every plant has a different process, but essentially it has to go to seed, so it has to go through its entire life cycle. For example, everybody has basil in the summer. If you let that flower completely, the seeds will have formed enough so that you can dry the plant. Typically if you hang it, it has got to be in a dry environment, preferably not direct sunlight. Then eventually, [you harvest the seeds] through various methods of extracting, whether it's just crushing the little pod with your finger and the seed will fall out, or shaking or the pillowcase method.

LBM: What should be planted during spring?

Greg Johansen: In coastal regions, it's a great time for any kind of fruit trees—the subtropicals,

so any citrus, avocado, cherimoya. As soon as ... any chance of cold weather [is] gone, you can plant potatoes as well. Red potatoes that I've grown here have been very good producers. I would go with any of your herbs, like chives, parsley, dill. Parsley is pretty hearty here. I would also plant cucumbers.

LBM: For those who don't have a green thumb, can you share some tips for planting seeds?

GJ: You're looking for soil temperature. You can use a small six-pack [of planting containers], and put it on the windowsill in your kitchen to get the greenhouse effect, warming it up to get a higher germination rate. You will usually transfer the plant to the ground after you see one or two sets of leaves. When you take it out, you want to get as much of the root system it's already developed into the soil as possible—just treat it like it's a newborn baby. Bury it with the crown (the tip of the green that you can see above the soil) on top of a hill, so that all around it you've got room for the water to sink in. You don't want that

crown under the soil. Then you definitely want to water it right then—not a deluge; again, you want to be gentle—just a little bit and again later that day.

LBM: What goals have you set for the Seeds Library in the coming months?

LS: The idea is to have a seed swap cycle published and printed. A calendar where it might be, say, the first Saturday of every month where anybody from the community or surrounding areas can come and visit the seed swap and exchange. And we will probably always have some [educational] lecture or some talk as a component. I think eventually we're hoping to partner with other organizations on the West Coast ... and have maybe a festival or some kind of symposium. *LBM*



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Greetings From Laguna

This March marks the 125th birthday of Laguna Beach's official greeter. Here's a look back at his legacy and others who have welcomed so many to our town.

By Karlee Prazak

Every morning at 7, a man appears on the corner of Brooks Street and Coast Highway. Like clockwork, he'll hang his bright red coat on the outstretched finger of the larger-than-life colorful statue, allowing his red and black sequined vest to glisten in the morning sunlight while he tunes his AM/FM radio to Energy 103.7. As cars whiz by, his dance moves settle somewhere between the King of Pop and the robot as he begins waving his gloved hand joyfully. The performer—Michael Minutoli— isn't looking for much more than a smile and a wave in return.

This sight is a welcome tradition started decades ago by a drifter who settled in Laguna and couldn't help but greet visitors to the town he so cherished. And Michael, arguably the modern-day incarnation, rationalizes why.

"[I have a] passion for this city," he explains. "My mother told me you can't love something unless it has a heart, but I adore this community that we live in, and I never want to leave."

There are a handful of men who are widely recognized as Laguna Beach greeters, but the city has officially christened just one: the incomparable Eiler Larsen, who would have celebrated his 125th birthday this year, on March 27.

HELLO, PAST

It all started when a shipwrecked Joe Lucas swam to Laguna's shore in the 1880s. With a trident in hand, a mouth fit for a sailor and a heart full of cheer, legend has it that Old Joe—as he was most fondly known—became the first to proudly stand on Main Beach welcoming newcomers. Greeting stagecoaches became his hobby and, as the story goes, the town and its visitors grew accustomed to the Portuguese fisherman's broken English and offhand remarks. The community even offered a daily \$8 stipend to support Old Joe until his death in 1908, according to Laguna Beach Historical Society archives.

Around the same time, a young Danish man named Eiler Larsen began making his way to the United States. "He had the feeling of wanderlust,"



Michael Minutoli greets commuters on the corner of Brooks Street and Coast Highway.

JODY TIONGCO

says Laguna Beach Historical Society President Gregg DeNicola of Eiler's youthful travels, which reportedly took him from Denmark to Siberia to South America and eventually the U.S.

Eiler even fought for the U.S. in World War I, but his courage led to a leg injury and an honorable discharge back to the States. "Rumor has it, with a few pennies and his thumb, he made it [from Washington, D.C.] to California," finding work in the San Joaquin Valley fields, Gregg shares.

Shortly thereafter, Eiler headed north to San Francisco, which is where he heard news of the Pageant of the Masters. "The easiest way to see the pageant—because [Eiler,] again, really had no money—was to be in it," Gregg explains. "He volunteered to be in one of the pieces, and he was [cast as] Judas in 'The Last Supper.'"

Eiler spent two more years commuting to his role as Judas, and ultimately moved to Laguna Beach in 1942. Since Laguna was constantly swarming with new faces, Eiler began greeting them in the mid-1940s. And if Eiler wasn't at his post—now known as the historic Greeters Corner at Forest Avenue and Coast Highway—it was common to see him doing odd jobs around town.

On Feb. 14, 1964, Mayor William Martin declared Eiler Laguna's official greeter, an unpaid position he held until he died in March 1975.

WELCOMING A NEW GENERATION

All things considered, anyone assuming the title after Eiler had very bold sandals to fill—literally, as he was known for pairing sandals with iconic red pants and bright plaid flannels. Attempts were made, though, and a very compelling one came from No. 1 Unnamed Archer, better known around town just as Archer. Beginning in the early 1980s, he spent nearly 25 years greeting from Ocean Avenue, where his go-to call was, "You're perfect." Archer served as a beloved reminder of the greeter culture until his death in 2009.

Then came Michael: Much like Eiler, he traveled from the East Coast to the West, chasing his dreams. Up until this point, local greeters sported long, straggly beards; Michael proves to be the most clean-cut so far, with a fearless personal style and personality, to boot. If you ask anyone around town, they'll attest to his infectious charm. After suggestions from people in the community, he took on greeting and it soon evolved into a daily routine by June 2011.

"I don't take it as a job, but I look at it as a responsibility," Michael says. "[I like] to get there before that certain group of people go to work or school. I really strive for that."



Laguna's official greeter, Eiler Larsen

COURTESY OF THE TOM PULLEY POSTCARD COLLECTION



A greeter statue on Brooks Street honors Eiler.

PAYING TRIBUTE

Many businesses and community members around town have taken the greeter culture to heart. Keep your eye out for these products and places honoring this piece of Laguna's history.

EILER LARSEN WAY: A short tribute to a long legacy, the alleyway that parallels Forest Avenue was renamed Eiler Larsen Way.

THE GREETER'S ALE: The hoppy flagship beer by Laguna Beach Beer Co. is on tap at several local establishments, including Big Fish Tavern, Gina's Pizza and La Sirena in south Laguna.

"THE GREETER": Elestial Productions has developed a documentary about greeters past and present, recently entering it for consideration in April's Newport Beach Film Festival. On March 27, Eiler's 125th birthday, the crew will be handing out birthday cake at Main Beach beginning at noon.

THE GREETER'S CORNER RESTAURANT: At the corner of Forest Avenue and Coast Highway—the historic spot where Eiler spent many of his days—a restaurant takes its name from Laguna's famed drifter. His footprints, along with the statue, commemorate the corner's claim to fame.

GREETERS STATUES: Two statues on Coast Highway commemorate Eiler Larsen: a painted cement casting at the contemporary Greeters Corner at Brooks Street by Charles Beauvais, as well as a red-wood carving by Guy Angelo Wilson outside The Greeters Corner Restaurant.

Each day begins the same for Michael: The 55-year-old says he rises with the sun, explaining that he's homeless by choice—irresponsible, but happy. After biking to Starbucks for a brief social stop, he pops into the White House to grab a bite to eat and say hello to owner George Catsouras. By 7 a.m., Michael makes one last stop at Heidelberg Café & Bistro for a warm cup of coffee before taking his post directly under the greeter statue on Brooks Street. Michael then throws all caution to the wind for the next three hours as he entertains the morning commuters. Occasionally, he says he returns in the evening to greet late-night visitors

and "give them something to talk about on their way in," mainly because he admits spreading this joy is where he feels most comfortable.

"It's really not important [how many people wave back]," Michael says. "The main thing is as long as I make sure they see me wave to them. It's ... overwhelming what a smile and a wave will do for somebody." **LBM**



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Tales *from* Behind *the* Bar

Laguna's veteran bartenders take a break from shaking and stirring to share their most memorable stories.

By Bria Balliet and Tessa Ghenender | Photos by Jody Tiongco | Illustrations by Shaylene Brooks

From the outside, Laguna Beach looks like a peaceful town with a laid-back vibe. That might be the case during the day, but once the sun sets over the calming sea, all bets are off. From recently graduated college students to parents, grandparents and tourists, almost everyone of age who has visited, lived or worked in Laguna seems to have a memorable experience involving one of the infamous local taverns. But the part of the story that's rarely heard is the one from the other side of the bar. Here, a few of our favorite bartenders open up about their most bizarre and unforgettable encounters.



MAXIM BLINKOV/SHUTTERSTOCK



Erin Miyawaki, The Saloon

ILLUSTRATED HISTORY

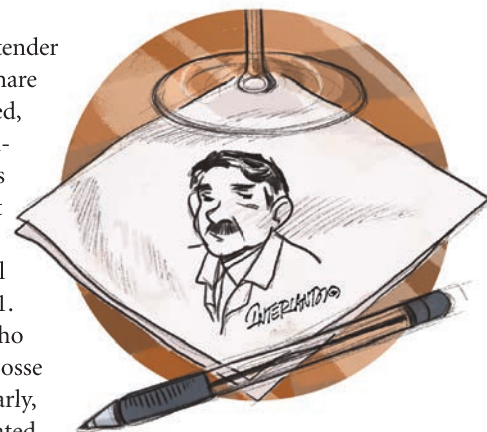
Erin Miyawaki, who was raised in Laguna, has been a bartender at The Saloon for more than 10 years. When asked to share some of her experiences behind the bar, she hesitated, explaining that there is an “unwritten rule of total confidentiality among bartenders.” One story that she was willing to tell—also her fondest memory of working at The Saloon—involves local celebrity Frank Interlandi.

Frank, a longtime Laguna resident, was an editorial cartoonist for the Los Angeles Times from 1962 to 1981. He traveled around town with his twin brother, Phil, who was a cartoonist for Playboy magazine, along with a posse of artists, writers and local fans. Their last stop, regularly, was The Saloon. The bartender at the time, Popo, created a special drink with coffee and liquor to help keep Frank awake long enough to draw up his next batch of cartoons for the following day. This shot, formerly known as the “Popo,” is still served at The Saloon today.

Flash forward to the early 2000s, at the beginning of Erin’s bartending career. Frank, now in his 80s, was still a regular at The Saloon. Erin was interested in getting to know the locals, especially the frequent patrons, but Frank was known to be particular about who he socialized with. He’d come in, order a glass of wine, and sit at his designated table, resisting conversation with her. She was determined to win him over.

One day, Erin’s father informed her that Frank and her uncle were good friends from LA. When Frank made his next appearance at The Saloon, Erin made sure to send greetings from her uncle. For the first time in her experience, Frank walked right up to the bar and looked straight into her eyes—she could see him light up inside.

Not long after, Erin and Frank began playing a subtle game. When he came in and ordered a glass of wine, Erin would deliver it to him with a napkin that had one squiggle drawn on it. Frank would take out his pen and complete the doodle. Sadly, Frank died in 2010, but his portrait still hangs in The Saloon right above the table he always occupied.



BATTLE OF THE BELLY DANCERS

Robby Boyd has been a bartender at Marine Room Tavern for more than 20 years. After working in a bar for so long, he finds that weird things just don’t seem so weird anymore. However, one encounter that stands out for him took place a few years ago during the annual Patriots Day Parade, when people swarmed into Marine Room (which is conveniently located near the end of the route).

Parade participants including veterans, City Council members and costumed belly dancers socialized while indulging in margaritas. Robby was catering to a packed bar when he overheard one of his neighbors yelling from the window, “Fight! There’s a fight!”

He dodged through the crowd to find two of the belly dancers flailing around on the sidewalk. “There were veils and jingle bells flying everywhere,” Robby recalls. The altercation came to a quick halt as local police officers arrived on the scene and separated



Robby Boyd,
Marine Room Tavern

the two ladies.

“I’ve never seen anything like it,” he says. In a small town like Laguna, news travels fast—not

long after the that Patriots Day Parade incident, there was a local play put on called “Lagunatics” that curiously included a scene where two belly dancers “beat the daylight out of each other.”



John E. Daub, The White House

WHITE HOUSE, RED CARPET

As the oldest restaurant in Laguna Beach—it opened back in 1918—The White House has seen everything from run-of-the-mill bar brawls to the passing of Olympic torches. It's also had its fair share of gossip-worthy celebrity sightings. Just ask John E. Daub, who has crafted cocktails for White House patrons for more than 30 years.

When prompted, he rattles off famous names as if he's reciting the alphabet: Heather Locklear, Kobe Bryant, O.J. Simpson and Richie Sambora all have quenched their thirst at this favorite local watering hole; Queen Latifah grabbed lunch solo one afternoon; Slash from Guns N' Roses has stopped in multiple times; and Jimmy Buffett even came by for a drink and ended up playing his famous "Margaritaville" song with the house band. But there's one famous



face that made a particularly strong impression on bar- and beach-goers alike when he visited Laguna one afternoon.

As the story goes, Michael Jordan and his friends were staying at The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel. After riding their bikes down to Main Beach, they joined a game of pickup basketball—much to the surprise of the others playing on the court. When they were finished shooting hoops, Michael and his friends asked the other players where they could grab a drink. Naturally, they pointed the group right up the street to The White House, and the rest of the evening became the stuff of Laguna legend.

"[He was a] super nice guy," John E. says. "He was signing autographs for everybody, sat down and was having a blast with everybody and ended up staying until close—2 in the morning. We have a picture of [Michael and his friends] leaving. ... They had to call a van from The Ritz to pick them up with their bikes and everything."



Dave Anderson,
The Deck



Bradford Charlton, veteran bartender at the Sandpiper

A NEW PERSPECTIVE

Bradford Charlton is a Laguna local that knows the bar scene like the back of his hand. His bartending career started in 1988 at Marine Room Tavern, and for the last decade or so, he has been a loyal Sandpiper employee. Although Bradford has witnessed his fair share of deviant acts, drunken debaucheries and altercations, his favorite memories were made by some of the amazing people he has met on the other side of the bar.

On a typical, busy night at the Dirty Bird, an extremely tall, athletic guy approached the bar with what appeared to be his date. It wasn't until the man closed his tab with his credit card that Bradford recognized the name of a tech billionaire. As the couple gathered their belongings and got ready to leave, the man said to Bradford, "You know, the life of a CEO is not all it seems to be. Coming out and having a good time is 10 percent of my life, the rest of it is 90 percent of hell. Ninety percent of your life is fun." He left, and Bradford couldn't believe a billionaire envied his crazy lifestyle.



BEHIND THE SCENES

The Deck is a beautiful spot, relatively new—in comparison—to the Laguna bar scene. With one of the best views in town, it's a haven for both tourists and locals. Dave Anderson has been on staff since it opened a few years ago, and has served a wide variety of visitors.

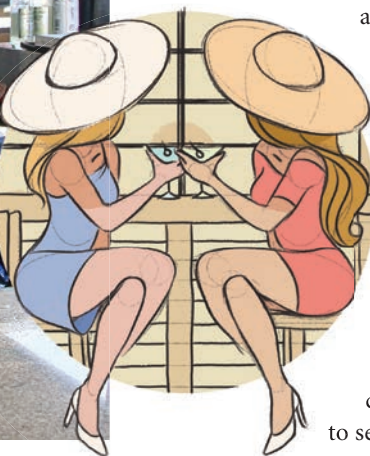
On one beautiful afternoon that happened to be Valentine's Day, Dave was trying to keep up with serving the crowds when he was approached by "The Real Housewives of Orange County" crew members. The stars of the show were coming to film at The Deck, and they asked if Dave would serve and host them during their visit. Dave accepted, although at the time he wasn't exactly sure what he was getting himself into.

After the waiver was signed and he was set up with a microphone, he began serving the ladies, trying to ignore the cameras and onlookers.

When the crew packed up their things and left, Dave went on with his work; as weeks passed, he eventually forgot all about the taping.

Five months later, he pulled out his phone during his break to find more than 20 text messages and missed calls from people he hadn't spoken to in years. Initially he was worried that something bad had happened, but then he quickly realized that the TV show had finally aired. Dave's friends insisted he watch the episode.

When he finally agreed, he was slightly embarrassed to find his "rear end" got a pretty substantial amount of airtime, as the cameras caught his behind on film every time he bent over to serve a drink. **LBM**



GIVING GREEN

From the coves to the canyon, Laguna Beach's eco-friendly nonprofits offer a variety of unique opportunities for volunteers.

By Connie K. Ho

With clear blue skies, rolling hills and sparkling oceans, Laguna Beach is the perfect place to immerse yourself in nature. In honor of Earth Day on April 22, explore a local organization or event committed to preserving Laguna's pristine landscape—diverse options, such as removing invasive plants, leading hikes and educating visitors about the tide pools, ensure that there's something for everyone.



New South Laguna Community Garden Park member Katie Babcock with Ann Christoph, who helped establish the garden

MAINTAIN THE COMMUNITY GARDEN

Tomatoes, grapes, leafy greens—these are just a few of the fruits and vegetables you'll see at the South Laguna Community Garden Park. Operated by the South Laguna Civic Association, the community garden is a volunteer-run initiative that gives locals the opportunity to grow produce, flowers and more.

"A side benefit of the garden is that when people come to plant and water and take care of their garden and meet other like-minded people, turns out you grow friendships that far exceed anything that has to do with the garden," says Bill Rihn, vice president of the South Laguna Civic Association and a member of the group's garden committee. "It's like an

old-fashioned barn-raising."

The garden park was established a little over six years ago with some seed money from the South Laguna Civic Association. Today, it boasts more than 50 planter boxes and a small shed. For those interested in volunteering, the group regularly has days where it works on removing weeds and Bermuda grass. Tools like spades and



South Laguna Community Garden Park, operated by the South Laguna Civic Association

rakes are provided for those who help. In the afternoon, after sprucing up the garden, individuals are invited to stay for refreshments—an outdoor picnic of sorts, where attendees share dishes ranging from tamales to cheese and crackers.

For Bill, the community garden park is a vital green space: “It’s good for the environment in the sense that, for every vegetable that someone grows, it doesn’t have to be transported from the San Joaquin Valley or Florida or some place, which means less fuel consumption and less carbon products in the atmosphere and so forth.”

REMOVE INVASIVE PLANTS AT THE PARK

Crystal Cove Alliance (CCA), the nonprofit partner of Crystal Cove State Park, offers citizen science programs related to the park’s 3.2 miles of coastline, its backcountry as well as the Michael and Tricia Berns Environmental Study Loop. Through these initiatives, the group aims to get people involved in protecting the region’s open spaces; it has worked with participants ranging from Brownie troop members to retirees. Many of the events hosted by CCA are one-time programs where people can volunteer for a few hours.



Mustard is one of the invasive plants that volunteers help remove in Crystal Cove State Park.

“A lot of people aren’t just helping with conservation efforts or participating in education programs; they’re actually helping to collect data that’s going to be used to make decisions on how best to manage Crystal Cove State Park,” says Sara Ludovise, CCA’s education manager.

One of the events organized by CCA, called Get Out the Mustard, began in 2014. In this pilot program, volunteers from corporations and the community helped remove the invasive mustard in Crystal Cove State Park. The organization provided equipment and demonstrated how to remove the plants, and then the 100-plus volunteers successfully filled nearly 130 trash bags with them. This year, CCA plans to expand the experiential initiative to include park maintenance, carpentry, painting and other interactive projects.

Roommates Rachel Pennington, a biological sciences major at UC Irvine (UCI) and Mackenzie Peich, an ecology and evolutionary biology student at UCI, began volunteering with CCA two years ago. “There are so many things that each individual of a community can do to help our environment and to live sustainably,” Rachel says. “This whole experience has solidified my belief in the importance of informal ... science education, something I never thought about previously.”

For Mackenzie, the experience has opened her eyes to new career possibilities. “One of the coolest things about this organization is how much they focus on education,” she says. “Once everyone is educated on the subject ... it makes it that much easier to solve it.”



A CCA volunteer helps remove brassica from the park.

COURTESY OF CRYSTAL COVE ALLIANCE



Volunteer with Laguna Canyon Foundation to lead hikes focused on birding, wildflowers and more.

**“WE ALWAYS EDUCATE PEOPLE AND TELL THEM NOT TO GO OFF THE TRAILS.
IF THEY DO, THEN THEY’RE TRAMPLING ON THE FOLIAGE, ...
SO WE MAKE SURE THEY UNDERSTAND.”**

—KAREN ANDERSON

CONNIE K. HO



Nix Nature Center volunteers discuss various trail paths with visitors before they embark on hikes.

HOST HIKES AT NIX NATURE CENTER

With lawn chairs inviting visitors to sit and view the idyllic setting and painted murals illustrating the lush landscape, the James and Rosemary Nix Nature Center in Laguna Coast Wilderness Park is a hub for outdoor enthusiasts of all ages. Those looking to share their passion for the area should consider volunteering with the nonprofit Laguna Canyon Foundation (LCF), a partner of the award-winning Nix Nature Center that’s dedicated to preserving, protecting and enhancing the South Coast Wilderness area.

Center volunteers greet visitors, help them plan their hikes—suggesting routes based on level of difficulty, weather and other factors—and provide emergency assistance when needed. They also lead birding and wildflower hikes, or hikes in the hills. These expeditions reflect the volunteers’ interests and passions, with some discussing favorite books or even incorporating yoga sessions.

Volunteers also participate in public programs like the quarterly Weekend at the Nix Center, which invites local wildlife experts to share their knowledge and lead activities. Previous events have included digging for fossils and identifying rocks and minerals.

In order to partake in the program, volunteers are required to be CPR-certified and complete a rigorous training process to ensure they are equipped to answer questions that might come up at the center. In terms of age requirements, volunteers must be at least 16 years old; however, exceptions can sometimes be made if children volunteer at the center with a parent.

Irvine resident Karen Anderson has volunteered with the Laguna Canyon Foundation and the Nix Nature Center for the past five years. During that time, she has met people from all over North America—from Colorado to Canada. For Karen, it’s important to emphasize how visitors can enjoy and respect the grounds while not disturbing the environment.

“When we take people out or when we help them with maps, we always educate people and tell them not to go off the trails,” she says. “If they do, then they’re trampling on the foliage and so forth out there, so we make sure they understand.”



Laguna Ocean Foundation has more than 80 TideWater Docents, individuals who remain on-site at local tide pools to answer questions about plants and sea life.

EDUCATE VISITORS AT THE TIDE POOLS

Christine Montonna, a North Laguna resident, loves the beauty of the ocean. With an interest in learning about the tide pools near her home, she applied to volunteer as a TideWater Docent with the Laguna Ocean Foundation (LOF), a nonprofit that protects and preserves the local beaches, ocean water, intertidal zone and watersheds.

During her nearly two years of volunteering, Christine has been able to introduce both

locals and tourists to the many plants and animals living in the tide pools, handing out colorful brochures with pictures of different types of sea creatures. She has also reported two injured sea lions that were in need of rescue so that the appropriate organization could assist. With these experiences under her belt, Christine considers herself an ambassador for the tide pools.

“Whenever I’m in the tide pool area, just looking at the ocean and watching the wave action



“WHENEVER I’M IN THE TIDE POOL AREA, JUST LOOKING AND WATCHING THE WAVE ACTION AND THE SUN—IT’S SUCH A SPECTACULAR BEAUTIFUL SETTING THAT IS ALWAYS VERY GRATIFYING.”

—CHRISTINE MONTONNA

and the sun—it’s such a spectacular beautiful setting that is always very gratifying,” she says. “Then to have people come into that beautiful setting and to feel that I have things that I can share with them and make them feel welcome and heighten their pleasure, I think those two things are the most rewarding aspects for me.”

Christine is one of more than 80 individuals who volunteer as TideWater Docents under the LOF. In Laguna, they can work at locations such as Goff Island, Wood’s Cove, Shaw’s Cove and Crescent Bay. Wearing a TideWater Docent shirt and LOF badge, with brochures in hand, volunteers act as on-site resources year-round.

According to LOF TideWater Docent coordinator Letty Skeen, there are a few requirements for individuals who want to join the docent team: All must be at least 18 years old and commit to volunteering a minimum of one three-hour shift each month. They are also required to complete a two-hour interpretative class followed by six hours of training on-site at the tide pools prior to signing up for their first shift.

NOT ONLY DOES ZERO TRASH HOST GARBAGE PICKUP DAYS, IT WORKS TO PREVENT LITTER FROM WINDING UP ON THE STREETS IN THE FIRST PLACE, ADVOCATING FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO PROVIDE MORE VESSELS FOR RECYCLING, TRASH AND CIGARETTE BUTT DISPOSAL.

CHALLENGE RODDIE



Founder Chip McDermott launched ZeroTrash in 2007 after growing tired of seeing litter on his city's streets.



"Trash talks" teach students about reducing waste.

TAKE TRASH OFF THE STREETS

Laguna resident Chip McDermott was fed up with the trash and cigarette butts littering the local sidewalks and streets. Seeing too few trash cans in town and along Coast Highway, he decided to take action, launching ZeroTrash in 2007. ZeroTrash has grown from the flagship Laguna Beach location into a number of different chapters and, over the years, has worked in cities including Chico, Dana Point, Newport Beach, San Diego and Rancho Santa Margarita.

With ZeroTrash, volunteers meet to clean up trash and recyclables in the community. They convene at a central location and then fan out to collect garbage from the beach, streets, parks and gutters. Those interested in volunteering with ZeroTrash can attend one of the cleanup days from 10 a.m. to noon on the first Saturday of each month. Equipment, including trash bags and pickers, are provided.

Local volunteer meet-up locations include Avila's El Ranchito Mexican Restaurant, Laguna Beach High School, Thalia Surf Shop and United Studios of Self Defense. To date, ZeroTrash participants have taken more than 150,000 pounds of trash off Laguna's streets; they recently removed 167 pounds in one month alone.

The organization also has partnerships with businesses; for example, Thalia and Avila's give discounts on goods and food, respectively, for those dressed in a ZeroTrash red T-shirt.

Not only does ZeroTrash host garbage pick-up days, it works to prevent litter from winding up on the streets in the first place, advocating for local governments to provide more vessels for recycling, trash and cigarette butt disposal. The organization also conducts educational programs at schools called "trash talks." These hands-on assemblies teach students about the importance of reducing waste through proper recycling and composting. **LB**



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STUDIO LIVING

Laguna Beach artists take us through their abodes, which creatively combine workplace and home.

By Sharael Kolberg | Photos by Jody Tiongco

Laguna has a long history as an artists' colony, and many of the local legends have built a live/work area where they can immerse themselves in their craft. Here, we get an inside look into the unique spaces of a glass blower, sculptor, silversmith, painter and mixed media artist, exploring how their customized surroundings facilitate their creative pursuits.

PAINTING A SURREALIST CHILDHOOD

Painter Scott Moore starts his projects at the computer, searching eBay for a nostalgic item reminiscent of his childhood. It may be a wooden toy car he had when he was a boy, a vintage clock radio from his grandmother's house, or a snow globe souvenir from a family vacation. His inspiration comes from the Internet and makes

its way onto the canvas in his home studio in Bluebird Canyon.

Scott has shown his work, which he calls "out-of-scale realism," in the Festival of Arts since 1980 and has sold every oil painting he has created.

Early on in his career, he and his wife, Carol, decided to excavate beneath their home to create a lower second floor. "We spent everything we had to build the 1,000-square-foot studio, but it was nice to have it on [a] different level," Scott says. Most days, he can be found peering at a canvas balanced carefully on an easel in the middle of the room, brush in hand, surrounded by tubes of every color of oil paint and a variety of paintbrushes. Attached to either side of the easel are photographs that inspire the painting.

The studio resembles an antique store. Along the back wall, shelves are filled with old-fashioned tchotchkes: old metal toy cars, glass milk bottles, retro analog clocks, Lincoln Logs, a record player, books such as "Lonesome Dove" and "The Grapes of Wrath," an aged postcard from Hawaii—it's like stepping back into the 1950s or 1960s.

His studio is not just for art, though. Scott has a TV and a stationary bike that he uses to exercise while watching old shows or movies to get ideas for his paintings. Distractions can be a temptation for those with live/work spaces, but Scott avoids that by having a regimented schedule from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. during the week. "Sometimes visiting with clients can cut into my weekends," he says. "But it's a small price to pay to be able to work for myself."



Scott Moore's studio has shelves filled with old-fashioned trinkets that inspire his surreal paintings.





Glass blower John Barber has a showroom and a studio with a large furnace to manipulate his materials.

BLOWING HOT GLASS

Many Lagunans have seen John Barber at work—he has offered glass blowing demonstrations at the Sawdust Art Festival for 37 years. He earns many “oohs” and “ahhs” as he twirls the molten glass in the 2,200-degree furnace and then blows it into the shape of a vase, Champagne flute, bowl or any number of art pieces. “Glass is exciting and challenging,” John says. “You have to be focused and in the moment. It either happens or it doesn’t. And you best like it hot. If you can’t take the heat, walk away.”

When John isn’t at Sawdust, he is creating his masterpieces using the same process at his home studio in Laguna Canyon. After he moved to the property in the 1980s, he converted the backyard from an open space into an outdoor studio by building a covered work area on a concrete slab, running a gas line and installing the furnace.

At the front of the property are his 900-square-foot home and his showroom. The latter, with

wood floors and white shelves that extend to the ceiling, displays works such as his vases in various shapes and sizes, wine glasses, decorative platters and bowls, sculptures, globes, etched glass and custom chandeliers.

A gravel path leads farther down the property to the 1,500-square-foot studio. To the left is a storage area and outdoor workspace where John fine-tunes his masterpieces with tools of the trade such as blowpipes, steel rods, sheers and optic molds. Next to the workspace is the large furnace where the glass becomes malleable at high temperatures. John inserts the blowpipes into the molten glass and retrieves a blob to blow into the shape of his choice, carefully, to avoid getting burned. His home studio also allows him to do glass casting, which he used to create the 27-foot-long mural, “Eternal Sunset,” at the entrance of Montage Laguna Beach.

The area’s beauty surrounds John as he works in his outdoor studio; the property ends at the

canyon wall. “We have such a picturesque backyard,” John says. “It’s a beautiful environment in which to live and work.”

SCULPTING A LIFE

When sculptor and painter Terry Thornsley, a veteran artist of the Festival of Arts, has to go to work, he has a short commute ... 24 steps down to his home studio in Laguna Canyon. While designing the 1,100-square-foot workspace, he took into consideration how much sun or shade the area would have; the angle of the light (important for painting); wind direction, to ensure a breeze would go through the workshop; the height of the ceilings for larger projects; dust collection in the grinding room; and storage for completed projects.

“It was nice to be able to design a space that fit my needs,” Terry says.

Since his work is inspired by nature, he enjoys the tranquility of the area. “I especially love the deer, owls, hawks,” he adds. “It’s a beautiful place. I try to focus on the wildlife, not the [thousands of] cars a day that drive by my house.”

Upon entering the main door on the ground floor, there is a casual showroom that includes a dozen alabaster stone carvings of various forms, from human to wildlife; a dozen sizeable bronze sculptures of varied subjects; and paintings, mostly watercolor, of Terry’s Southern California favorites, such as deserts and local beaches. Past the showroom is the primary indoor workspace, where Terry can be found equipped with a helmet and thick gloves to do tungsten inert gas welding on his bronze sculptures. He uses an air compressor to run high-speed die grinders and sanders, and an assortment of hand tools correct flaws or add texture.

To create molds for his bronze pieces, Terry has a special area where he uses thick wax forms to carve prototypes. He makes the sculpture out of wax, applies a silicone rubber over it, coats it with plaster and eventually sends it off to a foundry to be cast.

When he’s finished for the day, he retreats upstairs to the open-concept, one-bedroom living area. A balcony located off the living room houses a hot tub and features a beautiful view of the canyon and two adjacent redwood trees.

TRANSFORMING SILVER AND GOLD

Silversmith David Nelson doesn’t need much room for his craft, but having an area separate from his living space makes all the difference. “If it was in the house, it would be distracting,” he says. “It’s more important to be able to focus on the art.”



Terry Thornsley took lighting, wind direction, height and storage into consideration when he built a home studio for sculpting and painting in Laguna Canyon.

Since there's no long commute required, David is able to create a flexible schedule that fits his lifestyle. "Being an artist is a gift that I was given," he says. "My work is my love, my life, my passion. By having my studio at home, I can work whenever I want, day or night."

Working in such a detailed art form, David doesn't require much in the way of space. His pieces—silver and gold jewelry, belt buckles, money clips and more—are made primarily with sheet and wire fabrication with overlay,

combined with stone setting and inlay. Most of his work is done from a 3-by-5-foot workbench in his home studio; the space is small, but contains everything he needs.

Perched on a stool, he peers through a large, lit magnifying glass clamped onto the workbench to begin his work with the sterling silver wire or sheets. A jeweler's saw allows him to cut details into pieces, while other nearby tools include a torch, buffer and soldering iron.

A Sawdust Art Festival participant for 45 years,

David adds that there are increasingly fewer places in town left for up-and-coming artists to carve out joint homes and studios. "It's gotten much harder to survive and ... [make] a decent living in Laguna Beach as an artist," David says. "Because of that, Laguna Beach is forced to import artists. We need to make the town more artist-friendly by creating more affordable live/work spaces or we could lose our bohemian artists community that made people want to live here in the first place."



David Nelson stands at a 3-by-5-foot workbench in his home to create jewelry, belt buckles and other small pieces from gold and silver.

MAKING STATEMENTS WITH MIXED MEDIA

Walking through artist Pat Sparkuhl's home is like wandering through a gallery. His work can be found tucked into corners, hanging on the walls, teetering in the yard, adorning shelves—even dangling from the ceiling. Made from an assortment of items, such as dolls, shoes, crowns, flags and money, his mixed media work evokes contemplation and curiosity. He particularly enjoys recycling things and transforming them into works of art; in his front yard are two columns made from old shoe heels, titled, "A Pair of High-Heels."

"My life is about making art that sparks discussion, primarily about social issues," Pat says. "I have a disdain for war, and religion is a big deal to me. I'm spiritual, but not associated with conventional religion." Behind his house is his two-room work studio, where he has nearly 40 Bibles displayed on a wall, inlaid with various objects meant to convey messages about society and religion.

His desk is scattered with objects that may seem like trinkets or displaced trash, but when placed together in a meaningful way, they come to life. A stack of old Bibles, a metal sword and a porcelain figure become a statement against child molestation by priests. "I am a visual person," Pat says. "I have to have things to look at in my workspace."

Pat has lived in his home since 1979, and he and his wife, Heather, raised their two (now



Pat Sparkuhl uses mixed media art to make statements on social issues.

grown) children there. His work has been on display at the Festival of Arts for more than 30 years, and he taught art at Orange Coast College for 34 years. Although he has since retired and is focusing on curating for the Festival of Arts, his studio still serves as his creative haven.

"I still work every day," he says. "I like to be in my studio to keep myself familiar with what I'm dealing with. Having a home studio allows me to be very spontaneous, but a good work ethic is fundamental. You have to do it in a rhythmic practice and do it every day." LBM

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HOMEGROWN ARTISANS

*Locally crafted decor and accessories can be found throughout the town,
nation and even the world.*

By Cheryl Pruett

Laguna Beach is home to visionaries whose designs make a house a home. Whether it's super-soft textiles that brighten a bedroom or handblown light fixtures to illuminate a kitchen, local artisans are making innovative pieces that are equal parts function and beauty. And, as different as their creations and mediums may be, these artists all have one thing in common: Laguna has served as their muse.



PHOTO BY JODY TIONGCO

Let There Be Light

Glass blower and designer Caleb Siemon was born in nearby Newport Beach, then he lived in Laguna as a child and later took classes at Laguna College of Art & Design. Today, he and his wife, Carmen Salazar, have shared a home in Laguna Beach for 12 years and are the team behind Siemon & Salazar studio, where they design and create handblown glass pendants, sconces and lamps, as well as vessels like vases and bowls.

About seven years ago, the couple began translating their glass vessels into lighting fixtures. “We can think of glass in a whole other way with the illumination coming from the inside,” Caleb says.

One collection was entirely inspired by their surroundings and the landscape of Laguna Beach: The Banded Orb glass pendants feature a palette of colors that mimic the landscape and color transition from the ocean to intertidal zone, and then to the hills and fading into the sky. “We use those tones from different times of day to create the bands,” he says.

Their Happy Kiss pendant light is another example of Laguna’s natural environment inspiring art. Caleb was sitting on a surfboard one day, looking down into the water, watching the patterns of the sun’s reflection below—he and Carmen re-created the effect so that as the light goes through the glass pendant, the pattern on the wall is evocative of the sun’s reflection through the ocean to sand below.

Caleb describes their art as a perfect mix of two styles: The colorful approach of Venetia’s Murano glassmakers and the simplicity and restraint of Scandinavian design. “I like to allow the form to be the main idea or the color to be the main idea,” he says. If he uses a lot of color, he keeps the shape simple; if he uses clear glass, he

SIEMON & SALAZAR LIGHTING

The Laguna-inspired Banded Orb pendants are available in a variety of color combinations.

The green, brown, yellow and blue palette, for example, mimics nature from dawn to dusk, and from ocean to mountain.

The pendants sell for \$1,000 each at Lightopia on North Coast Highway.

(949-715-5575;
lightopiaonline.com)



will manipulate the shape more.

Carmen, a recently appointed arts commissioner in Laguna Beach, has a background in architecture and sculpture. She developed the hardware for their glass creations and heads the custom design portion of their business.

For Caleb, the inspiration he finds in Laguna is almost as strong as what draws him to glass. “I love the optic qualities of glass,” he says. “It reminds me of something mystical.”





Creative Cube

Cathy Bartels, who has lived in Laguna “forever,” says that her environment influences her mixed-media art. Those influences include seeing her son Jesse’s local murals (created for the public art project on Mermaid Street), hearing her son Dave occasionally play music—Indonesian gongs—with friends on Main Beach and viewing her husband’s iconic Main Beach art piece, “Canyon Chess and Checkers.” But Cathy surrounds herself with all things Laguna: Peter Blake Gallery on Ocean Avenue, Anastasia Boutique and Zinc Cafe & Market, and the many beautiful coves and beaches of the city are just a few of her favorites. Her nature is to take in all the texture Laguna has to offer.

She also loves the Laguna Art Museum; she previously served as co-chair of its Art Auction Committee, and one of her mixed-media wall pieces was up for auction at the museum in February. While mixed-media wall art is her main focus, she’s expanded to furniture pieces with her Leopard Cube ceramic tile tables. “I love surface design, which is what the Leopard Cubes are—just a different medium,” she says. “I’m of the school that finds leopard print a neutral.”

Her versatile, 18-inch cube can stand in for another dining chair in a pinch and has hidden marble feet with felt tabs for easy movement on floors that could be easily scratched, like wood and granite. The Leopard Cubes create a focal piece in a living room or other areas of the home that could benefit from a pop of intrigue. A pair works well as a coffee table, and they can be used both inside and on a patio.

She creates the tables in her C Studio, located in the house that she and her husband, Marlo, built years ago. “I’ve worked on design and art under various sides,” says Cathy, who has participated in the Festival of Arts and taught textile classes.

CATHY BARTELS ACCENTS

Cathy’s black-and-white ceramic tile Leopard Cubes can serve many functions, from stool to table, and they can be used both inside and outside. The cube sells for \$4,000 and is available by contacting Cathy at C Studio. (949-525-8292; cstudiolagunabeach.blogspot.com)



PHOTOS ON THIS SPREAD BY JODY TIONGCO



Heirloom in the Making

Randy Bader may have started out with medical school on his mind, but fate—and Randy—had other plans. He wanted to make furniture. As a young man, he was like many others in their early 20s who had bookshelves made of cinder blocks and wooden boards in their first apartment.

Fast forward, and Randy now has a woodworking studio in Laguna Canyon where he crafts custom furniture and accessories that sell around the world. He's known for rocking chairs he has made for 32 years. His choice of wood is domestic hardwood with "incredibly beautiful grain."

Randy has shown in the Sawdust Art Festival and Festival of Arts for 30-plus years. "I can't tell you why I'm successful," Randy says. "I do only what I want to do. My pieces have a really grounded feeling. They are cozy and intimate. I sell pieces of my soul—not just art."

Randy readily remembers moving to Laguna Beach in 1977 with a surfing buddy. Now Laguna is more than a youthful adventure, more than a home. For Randy, it's also a community of artists.

"I tend to feel the most camaraderie with the artists here who have given up everything else, but have given themselves over to art. [Having] people like that around allows you to ask about your own work and get the truth."

In addition to his rocking chairs, he crafts tables, mirrors, art shelves, clocks and more. He has a knack for taking the ordinary out of typically common pieces: A mirror doesn't need to be a rectangle; the pendulum of the clock can be set apart from the hour and minute hands.

"The heart of my work is I don't build it for money," Randy says. "Yes, it has value. You respect it. But, even if I won the lottery, I'd still make furniture."

RANDY BADER SEATING

Randy's custom-made rocking chair is typically constructed from beautifully grained, domestic hardwood, but he will use other woods if requested by customers. His goal is always to create a "really comfortable chair" that can become an heirloom. It is priced just shy of \$6,000 and is available at his studio, Randy Bader Woodworking, in Laguna Canyon. (949-494-8696; randybaderwoodworking.com)



Bring in the Color

Textile designer Kerry Cassill opened her lifestyle boutique, lala – A Kerry Cassill Store, in Laguna Beach in 1998. Starting with clothes, she quickly added bedding to her line of signature, hand-blocked, 100-percent custom-designed prints. Her sheets and pillowcases are now on beds across the United States and internationally. For her, it's all about the color—then the transformation takes place.

She emphasizes the importance of combinations; for example, balancing happy, bright palettes with more grounded, “low” ones. “If you want to live with your fabrics and treasure them, you don’t want something that’s all the same tone,” she says.

Beyond the colors and patterns, Kerry has a reputation for the feel of her luxury bedding. “I’m really known for the comfort of it all. It’s all so soft,” she says. She encourages mixing, matching and layering, which allows for style flexibility.

Kerry describes her collection as bohemian chic. Her style certainly made for an easy transition to Laguna when she moved here from Seattle about 17 years ago. California-born, she spent several years in Laguna in the 1980s before traveling to Paris and later to India. The textures and techniques she encountered overseas inspired her, as reflected in her shop on Coast Highway. “We do hand-block printing, which is rarely done,” she says.

While her world travels influenced her textiles, Kerry continuously draws on her local surroundings—especially for color. Laguna’s amazing light, sunsets and beaches all have served as sources of inspiration for her.

“In my line of work, it’s very helpful to see the colors,” she says. “I’m always looking for different color combinations. That’s how my brain works. I could be looking at dishes or pottery and be inspired by that. I’m more inspired by plants and trees and sand and shells—sunsets and nature.” LBM

KERRY CASSILL BEDDING

Striped bedding—particularly blues, grays and white—are some of Kerry Cassill’s favorites among her collections. The handmade, block-print, 100-percent cotton bedding is made for luxury. Her French Blue stripe sheets range from \$136-\$176 depending on size and style (flat or fitted) and are available online or at lala – A Kerry Cassill Store on Coast Highway. (949-464-9220; kerrycassill.com)



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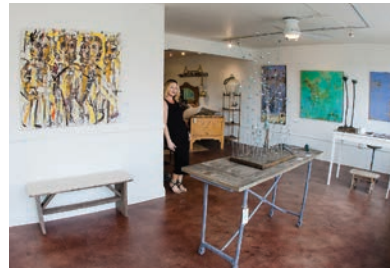
Once & Again owner, Loraine Fiore and Art Curator, Antonia Edwards, met in 2014 while staging the Philharmonic House of Design. After collaborating on several projects, the two savvy business women were inspired by each others acuity and agreed that the addition of Antonia Edwards Fine Art gallery to the Once & Again Home store was the perfect fit. The gallery opened within the store in January of 2015.

Loraine Fiore, who is also a Realtor, first opened Once & Again in North Laguna in 2013. "Finding a location between downtown Laguna Beach and

Newport Coast allowed for a larger showroom and also the space for events." Once & Again specializes in one-of-a-kind vintage furnishings, industrial pieces and distinctive home décor.

Antonia Edwards Fine Art gallery is the life-long dream turned reality for Edwards. Her career spans almost 2 decades as an artist and gallerist, having worked with some of Orange County's most respected art galleries. AEFA will feature original art with an emphasis on abstract expressionism and new contemporary. Each month, the gallery will feature a new artist and is a participant in First Thursday's Art Walk. Edwards also custom curates for residential and corporate collections.

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ARCHITECTURE ARCHIVES

Laguna's varied structural styles reflect its artistic spirit.

By Alina Orozco | Photos by Chad Mellon



This property on North Coast Highway exemplifies the Craftsman presence in Laguna today.

Perhaps it's our history as a hub for artists seeking inspiration away from the hectic city life that helped preserve the charm and creative integrity of this seaside town. But the artsy vibe extends far beyond the countless galleries and studios—it's also evident in the eclectic collection of architectural styles nestled within the picturesque landscape.

Neighborhoods are dotted with Mediterranean and art deco structures, bungalows and beach cottages. We explore the unique histories and designs of these styles, as well as other architectural approaches that are popular around town.

EARLY 1900S CALIFORNIA CRAFTSMAN

As Hollywood types and artists transitioned from summer visitors to permanent residents, they looked to solidify their space along the 7-mile stretch of the Pacific coast with structures that were more sound than the early rustic huts

many dwellers had at the time.

Like most of its seaside neighbors, Laguna began to see the evolution of Craftsman-style homes. Architect brothers Charles Sumner Greene and Henry Mather Greene, who worked together in Pasadena during the early 20th century, popularized the design approach.

This style was largely inspired by the Arts and Crafts movement, and blossomed as a reaction against the Industrial Revolution and Machine Age. Arts and Crafts architects and designers believed that a return to a simpler, less pretentious abode would lead to a healthier, more comfortable and productive life.

A quintessential Craftsman-style home features intricate details on the outside and can be recognized by a low-pitched roof, exposed rafter tails and beams under deep roof eaves, tapered columns, multipane windows and a large front porch to maximize the typically limited square footage of a midsize structure. Inside, the design is simple with focus on a wide-open layout,

making the most out of the space.

Longtime resident and architect Bob A. McGraw points to the property on North Coast Highway that once housed the Rohrer Fine Art gallery as a prime example of the Craftsman presence in Laguna today. “It’s a unique design solution that embraces the owner’s desire for Craftsman-style building,” says Bob, who has served on the city’s Design Review Board and Heritage Committee.

1900-1930

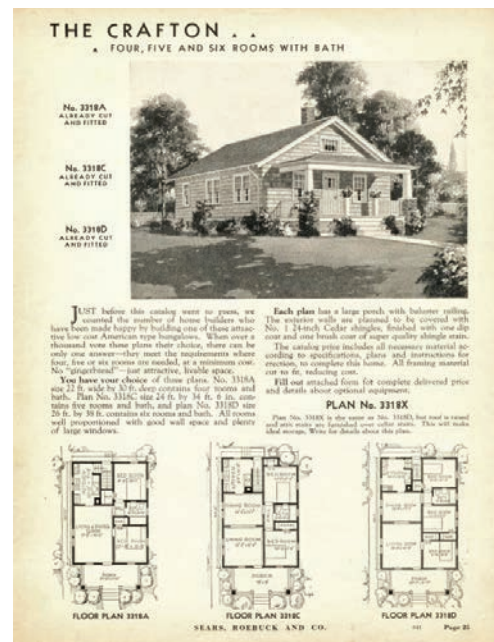
BASIC BUNGALOWS

The philosophical foundation of Craftsman-style architecture largely influenced this back-to-basics design, which focuses on single-family dwellings with open floor plans. The essential distinction between the Craftsman and bungalow designs is the level of fine detail: The bungalow adopted the large porch and practical floor layout seen in earlier local homes, but not the

attention to workmanship on the exterior.

The low-pitched roof of the bungalow style is suited for Laguna’s warmer climates, while the essential porch maximizes square footage and provides optimal views of the mountainous, oceanfront art colony. Even today, the city has maintained its roots in this style. A solid example is the historical society’s Murphy-Smith Bungalow on Ocean Avenue: Built in 1923 for the Murphy family, it is listed in the city’s historical inventory as “a builder’s bungalow with a box plan, multigabled roof and clapboard siding. Wide wood posts support the porch gable. The main door has side light windows and French doors open onto the bedroom.”

The charm, affordability and ease of this architectural style gained such popularity that bungalow kits became available in the early 1900s. Prospective homeowners could order a kit through a Sears catalog, and it would be shipped to their town by train.



An early 1900s Sears ad for a bungalow home kit



The Murphy-Smith Bungalow, built in 1923, is one of the few original houses still standing downtown.



Local architect Bob A. McGraw and his team are currently working to restore this 1927 beach cottage on Wave Street.

1910-1940

BEACH COTTAGE LIVING

According to the city's Historic Resources Element report, the beach-cottage style is indigenous to our area. There isn't another design that is so quintessentially Laguna, with its laid-back approach, minimalist style and optimal use of limited space.

Reportedly the most common architectural design in south Laguna, it gained popularity during the 1920s when many inland Southern California residents invested in a second home located along the coast.

The local beach cottages are derivative of the

Craftsman style, with outside additions such as a decorative porch and exposed rafters. A typical cottage is an asymmetrical construction with board-and-batten siding frequently used for the exterior.

These cottages usually started with a simple, single-story square or rectangular plan with a slightly gabled roof, and then were enlarged to transition to a full-time home as more people made Laguna their permanent residence.

"The original development of Laguna was in what is known as 'the flats,' and cottages were and still are perfectly suited for this area," Bob says.

Currently, Bob and his team are working on

restoring a classic beach cottage built in 1927. Significantly adding to the importance of preserving the home is the fact that a famed local artist, George Brandriff, once owned the property. Today's owners are also dedicated to restoring the cottage to its original glory.

The task requires careful attention to the nation's standards for the restoration of historic structures and to requirements by Laguna Beach's Heritage Committee. Bob is working with an architectural historian at Galvin Preservation Associates to ensure the original structure, finishes, doors, windows and other details are up to code and safe.



BOTTOM PHOTOS BY JODY TIONGCO

Top and bottom right: Laguna Presbyterian Church and the local firehouse are Mediterranean-revival structures. Bottom left: Heisler Building is a Provincial revival style.

1928-1940

A PERIOD OF REVIVAL

Likely the result of individual dwellers eager to showcase their own interpretations of style, period revival is the product of artistic expression and the desire to retain the village-like feel of the community. Period homes, such as those that can still be seen today on El Bosque, Los Robles and Catalina streets, are revivals of earlier historical styles; in Laguna, provincial and Mediterranean throwbacks were usually the most popular.

“All styles work in Laguna,” says Geoff Sumich

of architecture firm Geoff Sumich Design, who has designed homes in Laguna. “We will see a blending of styles where homes will have the charm of traditional architecture and the dynamic simplicity of modern architecture.”

The Mediterranean revival style reflects a combination of Italian and Spanish architecture with a profusion of arches, columns, parapets and wrought-iron details. Ornate low-relief stonework, tile roofs and stucco are all trademark details.

One example is the Laguna Presbyterian Church on Forest Avenue, a gothic-inspired

Mediterranean revival structure with stucco walls, tiled roof and a large garden. Another, also on Forest, is the fire station, which features a stucco finish, red-tile roof and Spanish-influenced tower in the back.

The Provincial revival style, exemplified by the local Heisler Building, comes from a different region altogether. Popularized at the end of World War I, a steep pitched roof characterizes this home design, similar to those found in the English or French countryside. The structures typically feature arched picture windows, steeply pitched dormers, heavy wood doors and a stucco finish.

1930-1940

THE MODERN ERA

The modern architectural style combines traditional Craftsman motifs with Machine Age imagery and materials. It's often characterized by bold geometric shapes, aluminum, stainless steel, chrome and plastics. Stained glass, inlays and lacquer are also common, and colors tend to be vivid and high contrast.

The modern homes of 1930s Laguna emphasized simplicity, rather than the ornamental revival style. The look manifested itself into two interpretations: art deco modern and streamline modern. The art deco style is reflected in a one-story structure that houses the Fetneh Blake boutique on North Coast Highway; across town in south Laguna, the Halliburton House—also known as the Hangover House—characterizes the latter.

Modern features include a square or rectangular plan, and vertical emphasis through the use of pilasters and massing. Materials are typically concrete or stucco, with simple treatment to windows, a prominent, accented entry and an interesting pattern or embellishment on the structure.

Each architectural style adds a distinct character to Laguna, representing bits of history with every gabled roof and decorative porch, and creating almost a gallery of housing design in this artists' town. LBM



The facade of this boutique on North Coast Highway reflects the 1930s art deco style.

Hangover House's style has been described as modern "with a brutalist influence."



PROTECTING HISTORY: THE MILLS ACT

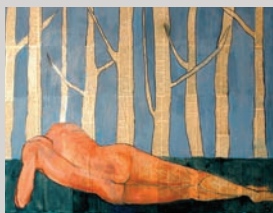
Laguna's historic structures are an important part of the local community, and in 1993, the city adopted the Mills Act in an effort to preserve these buildings.

WHAT IS THE MILLS ACT?: Enacted in 1972 by former California Sen. James Mills, the 10-year agreement lightens the property tax burden of historical structures from 40 percent to 60 percent—thus encouraging owners to spend more money rehabilitating their homes.

WHO CAN ENTER A MILLS ACT CONTRACT?: Qualifying homes are defined by the City Council as structures falling under the "E" and "K" ratings on the historic register. The contract transfers to new owners when a property is sold, and automatically renews each year.

WHAT DOES IT ENTAIL?: Homeowners must actively maintain the historical integrity of their properties. That means, for example, that homeowners can't add three stories and five garages to a 1920s cottage—they must renovate within historical parameters.

FINAL WORDS: "In architectural terms, this town has been wise in limiting high-rise oceanfront development and using a design review process to encourage appropriate development and limit outrageous architectural projects," says architect Bob A. McGraw. "We find the design review process exhausting, and often frustrating and subjective, but it is the primary tool the city has to preserve neighborhood and environmental character."



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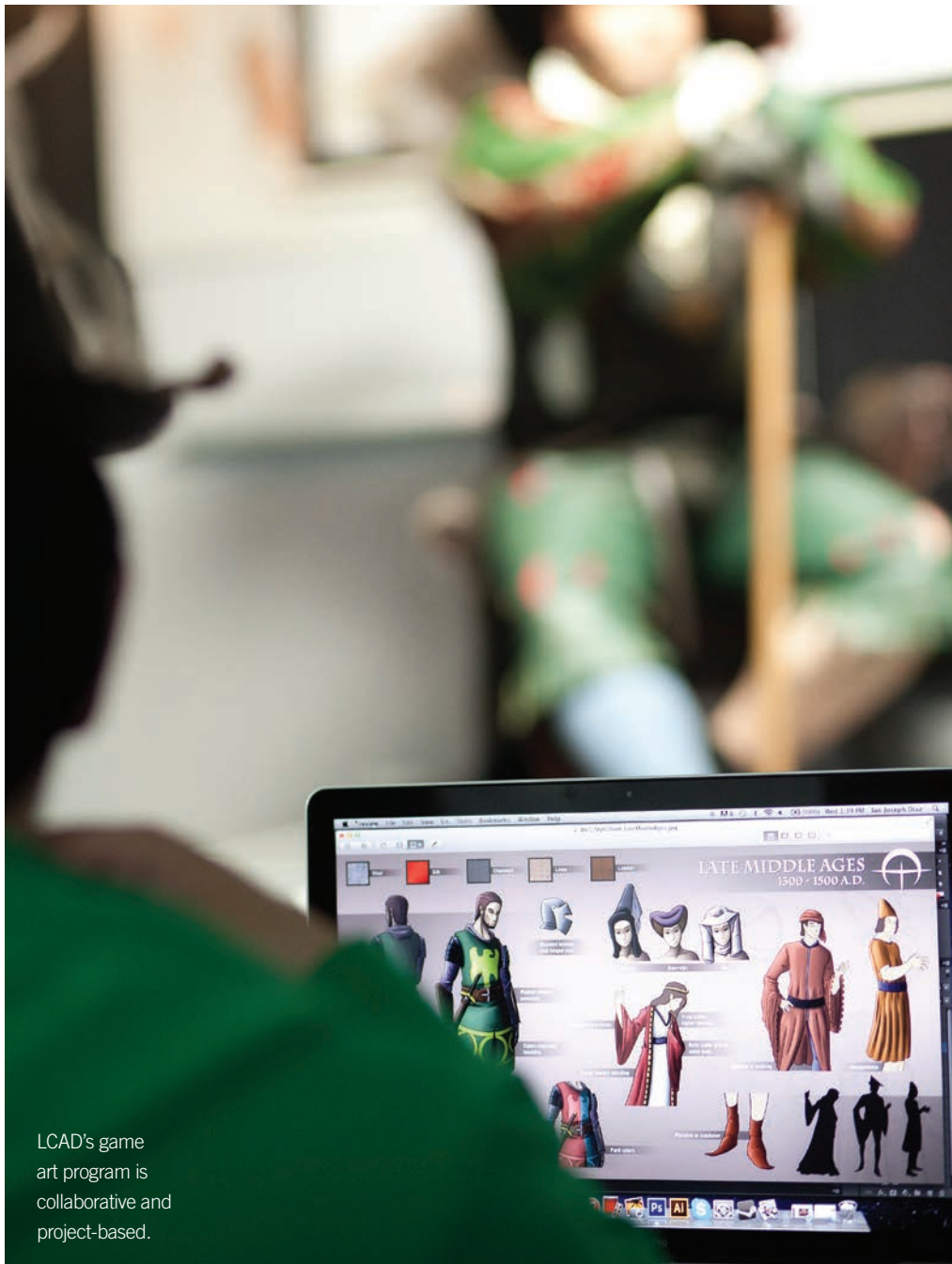
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CANVASTO COMPUTER

Digital creations make an award-winning splash in Laguna Beach, solidifying the city's presence as an artistic haven for both traditional and modern mediums.

By Peter A. Balaskas



LCAD's game art program is collaborative and project-based.

Digital art is a unique form of expression that constantly evolves technologically and creatively—and it continues to spread geographically around the globe. Last September, Laguna Beach stepped into the spotlight when Laguna College of Art & Design (LCAD) was chosen as one of the top design schools by LG Electronics USA's new-media art competition, The Art of the Pixel: Powered by LG Ultra HD 4K and OLED TV; the school's design and digital media program was awarded \$25,000 for winning the popular vote. LCAD student Dohee Yang was a finalist and received \$5,000 for her work, titled "Journey," which, as she shares, was only part of the overall reward.

"In the process, I even taught myself how to use certain programs and discovered the possibilities of what I could do," Dohee says. "It felt good to know that [the] time I had put in had paid off and that I was going to receive recognition for the work I was doing."

Dohee's award is just one of the latest examples of how digital technology is slowly influencing more Laguna-based artists with each passing year. And with LCAD's increasing presence as one of the top design and digital media programs in the country, there is no doubt that the town's reputation as a prominent Southern California art center will continue to grow beyond expectation.

EVOLUTIONARY ART FORM

Although digital art is still fairly new in Laguna Beach, this combination of mixing digital technology with creative vision has been slowly gaining ground since as early as the 1950s, when it was mostly known as computer or multimedia art. The late Andy Warhol brought the medium to the mainstream in 1985 when he was commissioned to demonstrate graphic arts capabilities on a Commodore Amiga computer. During the demo, Andy took a digital snapshot of Blondie's

DONDEE QUINCENA

Deborah “Debbie” Harry, then manipulated the colors using the paint program ProPaint. Last year, more of Andy’s Amiga experiments—ranging from doodles to drawings of Campbell’s soup cans—were discovered on floppy disks.

Other traditional artists have evolved from the paintbrush, pencil and paper to a computer pen stylus, mouse and graphics tablet to create two-dimensional vector graphics and 3-D visual effects. Some have even included audio and video effects using advanced software to enhance their creative works.

Local artist and Festival of Arts exhibitor Murray Kruger delved into the digital world in the early 1990s when he began to learn about Photoshop, Adobe’s popular graphics and image editor. After registering for various computer classes, he began to explore digital art programs such as ZBrush, which he says enables artists to sculpt 3-D forms as though they were pieces of clay.

“Despite its somewhat alien interface, I felt like a technical barrier had been lifted, and with a little study and practice, some amazing things started to happen,” Murray says. “[It] was like a light went on and I was doing stuff with this program and creating imagery that I couldn’t do as a painter, and it’s been an exploration ever since.”

DIVING INTO DIGITAL

Other well-known Laguna-based artists and art teachers have had similar success in expanding into the digital art realm. Catharin Eure, chair of LCAD’s design and digital media program, entered the world of digital art by attending the Rhode Island School of Design. In addition to painting and drawing classes, she learned more about how to problem-solve through what she calls “visual thinking,” especially when it comes to utilizing digital art for marketing and advertising.

“Design is about ... applying art and visual images to communicate ideas, persuade thinking and solve problems,” Catharin says. “Every book, magazine, poster, apparel graphic design, iPad and iPhone app, tag, package, advertisement, website, computer graphic, display and exhibit, 3-D and video began as a creative spark in the mind of a designer.”

Sandy Appleoff, the chair and founder of the LCAD game art program (who is now piloting the new Master of Fine Arts in the art of game design), has always loved painting utilizing water-based pigment mediums. After expanding her horizons by working with Photoshop while teaching at the Kansas City Art Institute,



A still from “Journey,” a digital work by Laguna College of Art & Design student Dohee Yang



Festival of Arts exhibitor Murray Kruger



Sandy Appleoff is the chair and founder of LCAD's game art program.

“LAGUNA BEACH IS BLESSED WITH INSPIRING AESTHETIC AND LOCATION. FOR THE GAME ART MAJOR, LCAD IS POSITIONED IN THE HEART OF LAGUNA BEACH, WHICH IS AMIDST SOME OF THE GREATEST GAME COMPANIES IN THE WORLD.”

—SANDY APPLEOFF

she pursued her MFA in scenography at the University of Kansas, where she learned computer-aided design programs AutoCAD and Vectorworks. They soon served as the foundation for her love of spatial design, especially the 3-D world of stage lighting and how various illumination levels can convey the overall mood and story.

“My watercolor costume concepts, which were still a faster way of working for me at that time, were scanned into Photoshop and Corel paint [program] to bring period textiles and nuance color to the final designs,” Sandy says.

“[They were then] placed in my final 3-D renders for the director, much like the pipeline for concept development in game art today.”

Her educational arc led to her influencers in the digital art world, including artists and LCAD lecturers Nathan Fowkes and Patrick Faulwetter, who have been instrumental at the college's game art program.

NATURALLY INSPIRED

Although digital art has proven to be a major boon for many local artists, its popularity with Laguna Beach as a whole has been a slow, yet

patient, process. Murray recalls how, in 2006, he became the first digital artist to enter in the Festival of Arts. His multiple appearances there resulted in him selling his work, “The Magician,” to the festival in 2011.

“It was a good feeling to be a part of something new, and I feel it was actually pretty progressive on the festival's behalf,” he says. “When the Festival of Arts bought one of my pieces for their permanent collection, it was an honor and a great validation for this kind of art.”

Digital art's popularity also has spread to many of the students attending LCAD. Dohee



Catharin Eure (far left), chair of LCAD's design and digital media program, with students

“DESIGN IS ABOUT ... APPLYING ART AND VISUAL IMAGES TO COMMUNICATE IDEAS, PERSUADE THINKING AND SOLVE PROBLEMS. EVERY BOOK, MAGAZINE, POSTER, APPAREL GRAPHIC DESIGN, IPAD AND IPHONE APP ... BEGAN AS A CREATIVE SPARK IN THE MIND OF A DESIGNER.”

—CATHARIN EURE

GAME DAYS

Laguna College of Art & Design's annual camp for teens covers everything from digital design to audience analysis.

For the last four years, LCAD has hosted its annual summer Game Development Camp, which aims to introduce high school students to the art and industry of game design. Magy Seif El-Nasr, the director of game educational programs and research at Northeastern University, created the idea of the Game Camp after conducting a number of workshops for students in middle and high school.

“It has stimulated students to understand what interests them career-wise,” she says. “I had several great examples of kids who took this workshop ... and now are writing their own business proposals to build their first game companies.”

Magy shared her experiences with Sandy Appleoff, the chair and founder of the LCAD game art program, resulting in the creation of Game Camp on the Laguna campus. This year, it will include classes discussing career goals and the different levels of the game production process, such as art, design and programming. Students



LCAD hosts an annual Game Development Camp.

will also learn about creating, pitching and implementing a game idea, as well as developing prototypes and High Level Design (HLD) documents. Other lessons will cover art content creation; handling input and score; checking interactions such as variables, flags and character animation; and researching the game's intended audience.

Magy stresses that the most important aspect of the Game Camp is for the students to cooperate

recalls being overwhelmed by Laguna's beauty when she first moved here; she notes that the environment inspires not only her art, but the work of her fellow artists.

“Laguna Beach cultivates an environment where the art culture is booming, where so many art festivals, pageants and art walks take place,” Dohee says. “When creating things digitally, it helps to pull references from the real world because you can't beat the beauty of Mother Nature.”

Sandy adds that Laguna Beach not only nurtures the artist from a creative standpoint in terms of source materials for game art, it also serves as the perfect location for LCAD, a cultural campus where media professionals visit from around the world in order to recruit future candidates, as well as keep up to date with the latest technologies.

“Laguna Beach is blessed with inspiring aesthetic and location,” Sandy says. “For the game art major, LCAD is positioned in the heart of Laguna Beach, which is amidst some of the greatest game companies in the world.”

The future of digital art in Laguna Beach continues to be promising, especially with LCAD's influence. The school's design and digital media program has received numerous accolades in addition to its latest award, and it continues to enter prestigious digital art contests. It also has been researching 3-D printing, exploring that tool's possibilities with toy design. LBM

in a teamwork environment from the concept to the complete product, an important lesson to learn when it comes to the gaming industry.

“This allows them to work together collaboratively in a short cycle of idea inception, prototyping and testing,” she says. “They see all the aspects of product development as well as the team and coordination efforts needed, but in a small scale and a very fast development cycle.”

According to Magy, this year's Game Camp—taking place July 6-9 and July 13-16 (the deadline for registration is April 14)—will follow the same format as previous years. The highlight of the program will be when the students present their games to an audience of not only their families, but also professionals in the gaming industry.



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LONG WEEKEND IN *Wine Country*

A quick trip to Sonoma is the perfect girlfriend getaway.

By Katherine Duncan

Family and work obligations can make it difficult to even grab dinner with friends, much less find time to go on a vacation together. But a long weekend away may be just what you need to reconnect. Sonoma Valley's colorful history, unique shopping and gourmet dining make it an ideal destination for some rest and relaxation with a fellow wine lover.





HIT THE ROAD

Rather than traveling straight to Sonoma, treat the journey there as part of the vacation. A road trip through California's picturesque landscape will give you time to chat, while a side trip to Santa Barbara or San Francisco is a fun way to break up the drive.

In Santa Barbara, you can stretch your legs with a stroll along the 2,300-foot-long Stearns Wharf. The oldest working wooden wharf in California, it's home to 17 businesses, including a marine museum, exhibit hall, apparel stores and eateries. After an ocean-view seafood lunch at Santa Barbara Shellfish Co., a stop by Mother Stearns Candy Co. will satisfy any sugar craving. Fill a self-serve bag with a variety of candy to suit both of your tastes, and then share the sweets on the walk back to the coast.

The city also provides plenty of opportunities to get a jump on wine tasting. The Urban Wine Trail, just a short walk from the wharf, includes more than 20 tasting rooms and wineries throughout downtown. Modern tasting room AVA Santa Barbara takes you on a full-flavored tour of the county with small-batch wines from each of the region's five American Viticultural Areas (AVAs). As you sip the bright, acidic chardonnay from Santa Maria Valley, for example, you can examine the massive, hand-drawn chalk map of the county that decorates the wall behind the bar, and the soil samples housed in mason jars.

HOME AWAY FROM HOME

The drive into Sonoma Valley offers unbeatable views. The road winds through rolling green hills covered with seemingly endless rows of grapevines—in fact, Sonoma is home to nearly 60,000 acres of vineyards. Even the grounds of MacArthur Place, a historic hotel near the center of the city, were once part of a 300-acre working ranch filled with vineyards and fruit orchards. Today the property is dotted with restored buildings and newly constructed cottages set amongst lush gardens, for a total of 64 rooms.

The wine reception, complimentary for guests, is a perfect introduction to wine country and a relaxing way to unwind after the drive. Held each day in the library from 5-6 p.m., it includes a variety of whites and reds accompanied by cheese, crackers and fruit. While sipping a glass of vino, peruse the selection of books, games and DVDs available to borrow. MacArthur thoughtfully combines historic charm with modern amenities in its accommodations; in addition to a DVD player, each uniquely designed guest room features an LED television, Keurig coffee maker and wireless Internet.

A trip to the hotel's Garden Spa is a refreshing way to begin the next day. Located at the heart of the property's gardens, the spa incorporates the fruits, flowers and herbs grown just outside the door into its treatments. The scents of the aromatherapy massage are tailored to your preferences.



Clockwise from top left: Santa Barbara's Stearns Wharf, built in 1872; the downtown Urban Wine Trail in Santa Barbara, home to 20-plus wineries and tasting rooms; the Carriage House at MacArthur Place in Sonoma

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Sculptures at Cornerstone Sonoma, a serene landscape filled with gallery-style gardens and art

and upcoming plans. Have a busy afternoon of shopping ahead? The masseuse may suggest peppermint oil to awaken your senses. With the 50-minute option, you're treated from head to toe, but it's fast enough to leave you feeling reinvigorated with plenty of time to tour the city.

If you're looking for more intimate accommodations, there are plenty of cozy options nearby. Try Hidden Oak Inn, a two-story house built in 1914, or An Inn 2 Remember, which includes six rooms across two vintage homes.

SHOPPING AND ART

Sonoma Plaza is a short 15-minute walk from the hotel. Spanning 8 acres, it was established in 1835 and is designated as a National Historic Landmark. With more than 40 retail stores, galleries, 20-plus eateries and as many tasting rooms, you could easily dedicate the entire getaway to exploring it. But if you can only devote a day during a short trip, fuel up for shopping with breakfast at one of the local cafes. Baked goods at Basque Boulangerie Café are irresistible—the freshly baked croissant with ham, egg and your choice of cheese is massive (and economical at just over \$6).

The plaza exudes small-town charm and is filled with unique businesses. Sox de Vine focuses on feet, with novelty and fashion socks that run the gamut from bizarre to beautiful. Tiddle E. Winks Vintage 5 & Dime sells nostalgic finds like

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Historic Sonoma Plaza offers a collection of retail stores, galleries and tasting rooms over 8 acres of land.

metal lunch boxes, as well as Sonoma souvenirs and playful gifts, like a set of mini mason jar shot glasses. And if you had to leave pups at home, they're sure to forgive your absence if you return with a fresh treat from Three Dog Bakery. Many, like the Harlequin Hearts, could easily be mistaken for gourmet pastries intended for humans.

For an artistic outing, head to Cornerstone Sonoma, the first gallery-style gardens in the country. The ever-changing acres are filled with installations that creatively combine landscape and art, such as Andy Cao and Xavier Perrot's "Bai Yun" (White Cloud)—cumulus clouds crafted from wire mesh, with thousands of clear crystals for the rain drops. After working up an appetite traversing the gardens, grab lunch at on-site restaurant Park 121. Its menu features local ingredients and changes with the season. The tomato-basil soup is delightful on a cool afternoon.

If the garden installations inspired you to add an artistic flair to your space back at home, check out the unique decor at Artefact Design & Salvage. The store feels more like a gallery, with antique furniture, a carefully curated selection of sculptures and paintings from prominent artists in the area, and other unusual pieces. If you're lucky, you may also get a chance to say "hi" to Axel, Artefact Design owner Dave Allen's bulldog and Cornerstone's unofficial mascot. (We dare you to try to take away his beloved bucket.)



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Park 121, the on-site restaurant at Cornerstone Sonoma, serves seasonal fare.

DELECTABLE DINING

Ask around about the best Sonoma Valley dining options, and you're almost certain to hear about LaSalette Restaurant in Sonoma Plaza. The eatery serves "cozinha nova Portuguesa," new Portuguese cuisine, incorporating local, seasonal produce. The menu's smart selection of roughly 20 small plates, which may include tender escargot, smoked sturgeon, crispy pig ears and fried goat cheese, pair brilliantly with wine. A set of five is served with accompaniments like spiced almonds and bread, perfect for ensuring that not a drop of the escargot's garlic-infused sauce is lost. The chef may even send out a few complimentary tastes, such as a bite of olive, cheese and linguica as an appetizer, or a chocolate almond truffle for a dessert small enough to be savored by even the most satiated appetite.

For an unforgettable dinner to conclude the trip, head to the girl & the fig, also located in the plaza. The atmosphere is elegant yet relaxed, with plenty of personality—paper covers the tablecloths, and playful metal-flower centerpieces stand in for the more traditional fresh arrangements. The servers are friendly and knowledgeable: When you're torn between entree options (duck confit, or flounder meuniere?) or waffling about which cocktail to sip (Sonoma mule, or Fig Fashioned?), their expert insight can guide you to the best pick.

It's tough to say no to wine in wine country, but the Fig Fashioned is an excellent choice if you'd like a respite. A fresh take on an Old-Fashioned, it's crafted with Buffalo Trace bourbon



Basque Boulangerie Café in Sonoma Plaza

and house-made bitters and fig liquor. It's an ideal accompaniment to The Works plate, which includes a variety of cheeses—sheep, cow and goat—and a selection of meats cured in-house, with additions such as spiced nuts and fig cake.

The charred Brussels sprouts are a must-try starter. Covered in a blanket of braised bacon, this preparation will even win over diners who have despised the vegetable since childhood. For the main course, the two-leg option of the tender duck confit is a perfect portion when shared. But make sure to save room for dessert: The warm brown butter pear tart, served with cinnamon ice cream and candied kumquats, is exceptional, especially when paired with a dessert wine.

HISTORY AND WINE

With more than 400 wineries in the area and limited time for the trip, it's difficult to choose which to visit, but history buffs can't miss Buena Vista Winery. A registered California Historical Landmark, it was the first premium winery in a state that now has a lofty reputation for wine-making. It feels as though each step on the path leading to the Old World-inspired establishment takes you further back in time. Informational plaques along the way provide details on notable figures from George Washington to "California wine heroes" like André Tchelistcheff, known as the "dean of American winemaking," and Col. Agoston Haraszthy, the self-proclaimed Count of Buena Vista, who founded the winery in 1857.

The tour of Buena Vista covers its colorful



The first wine caves in California were completed at Buena Vista Winery in 1864.



The Count, a red blend, is available near Laguna.

history, including the flamboyant life of the Count, who immigrated to the United States from Hungary in 1840. A man of many firsts, he was the first to farm hops in Wisconsin, became the first sheriff of San Diego in 1849 and excavated the first wine caves in California. The Count's death was as unique as his life. As legend has it, he perished after falling into an alligator-infested river in the jungles of Nicaragua in 1869. Today, a life-size alligator—with a top hat gripped in its jaws—hangs from the ceiling of the tasting room's first floor.

Visitors are guided through the winery's Champagne cellars, where tool marks from the excavation in 1864 can still be identified on the limestone walls. Closed for many years following an earthquake, they underwent a massive restoration led by Jean-Charles Boisset after Buena Vista was acquired by Boisset Family Estates four years ago. They're now filled with oak barrels aging some of Buena Vista's Private Reserve and small lot Vinicultural Society wines. Upstairs, the new wine tool museum (scheduled to open March 24) focuses on the winery's history; it's filled with a collection of artfully arranged historic viticulture tools from France.

The visit to Buena Vista wouldn't be complete without a tasting in the Press House, which includes samples of the wines aged in the caves right next door. When you return home, you can relive your visit by celebrating girls' night with Buena Vista wines that are available locally, including The Count, a red blend, and Carneros Pinot Noir, which are available at Total Wine & More in Laguna Hills and other nearby retailers. LBM

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LAGUNA'S HABITAT

PRIVATE PARADISE

The gated oasis of Emerald Bay is home to unique residences, numerous amenities and, most important, friendly neighbors.

By Tanya Yacina | Photos by Jody Tiongco



Behind the gates of Emerald Bay, you'll find a tight-knit community wrapped in character and charm. Residents can be found walking or driving golf carts to the half-mile, private-access beach; playing tennis on one of six professional tennis courts; swimming at the pool complex; or attending one of the many community concerts or children's events.

"Since I moved here from Ladera Ranch, I feel like I'm on vacation every day," says Emerald Bay resident Ken Stetter. Located in north Laguna Beach, the exclusive community spans both sides of Coast Highway and encompasses roughly 500 homes that express the many different architectural aspects of the Pacific coast.



FAMILY FACTS: Stan and Ellen Gordon
DAY JOB: Stan is an attorney and entrepreneur; Ellen is in real estate and business consulting.
SPACE: Approximately 3,900 square feet, three bedrooms, three baths
HOUSE TIMELINE: Built in 1941, purchased in 1976, remodeled in 2005
FABULOUS FEATURE: Many of the rooms are unique sizes and shapes, where none of the walls are the same length.



DIVERSE DIMENSIONS

Ellen and Stan Gordon were relocating from the Los Angeles area when Stan became part of a law firm in Santa Ana. They toured many homes in Laguna Beach, but weren't drawn to any of them.

"It had been cloudy all day and the skies finally cleared, so we went back to our ...[real estate agent's] home in Emerald Bay to take a quick break and grab her sunglasses," Ellen says. "We fell in love with her home immediately and told her to find us something just like it." The Gordons discovered that the agent's home was for sale, and they bought it right away.

"Our house is well done architecturally," Ellen says. "It was even featured in Architectural Digest in the early 1970s." The home, an art deco, Mediterranean-style building, features terraced gardens on a corner lot. A unique property within

the community, the house boasts rooms where each wall measurement is different from the next.

Floor-to-ceiling bookcases and a dual-sided fireplace separate the main rooms of the open floor plan. The full windows spanning the front of the house offer an ocean view from almost every room, while projecting light into each nook of the home and bringing in fresh ocean air. The Gordons remodeled their house 10 years ago and were conscious not to alter any of the rooms' shapes or sizes.

"We wanted to keep the character of the home, but also needed to update the plumbing and flooring—we gutted it almost completely," Stan explains. The home is lined with soft yellow and gray walls with crown molding; light walnut and marble-tiled floors; and various pieces of Asian-inspired artwork and furniture gathered on the

Gordons' international excursions. The couple also employed a local artist to faux paint many of the bathroom fixtures and furniture pieces.

"We raised our girls in this home and it holds many, many memories for us," Ellen says. "As our children started to grow up, we involved them in the children's programs offered in the community." Ellen helped pioneer many of the programs now offered in Emerald Bay, including the preschool in the firehouse.

"We love to have friends and family over—Ellen's a great cook," Stan says. The kitchen is Ellen's workshop of sorts. The expansive, caramel-colored countertops offer plenty of space for her to whip up her next culinary masterpiece.

"Our home is comfortable and open, and great for entertaining any time of the year," Ellen says.

FAMILY FACTS: Ken and Sanene Stetter, their children, Kasey (19), Kori (17) and Jack (5 months)

DAY JOB: Ken is president and Sanene is senior director of By George LLC, a boutique creative agency in Orange County.

SPACE: 1,963 square feet, three bedrooms, three baths

HOUSE TIMELINE: Built in 1958, purchased by Sanene's family in 1972, Sanene moved into the home in 2003, Ken joined in 2012

FABULOUS FEATURE: A central courtyard with a calming fountain and manicured landscaping.



CREATIVELY COMBINED

Sanene Stetter moved into her family's Emerald Bay home when she was in her late 20s. "After divorcing from my first marriage, my grandparents allowed me to move in to get back on my feet—with my two dogs," Sanene explains. "I was only supposed to be here for a short while, but ... I'm still here."

Upon move-in, Sanene began making small renovations to the home. "There's now all new black, ceramic tile flooring in the living room and the master bedroom has a dark wood laminate," Sanene says. The house also has been painted inside and out—blues and yellows inside and a crisp white on the exterior. The central courtyard and closed-in backyard also have undergone landscaping upgrades, and an outside Jacuzzi was recently added.

Sanene's husband, Ken, moved into the house about three years ago and the couple has continued to make updates. "We re-did the guest bath by upgrading the glass shower stall and fixtures, and we are about to completely renovate the kitchen area," Ken explains. "Since we've blended our families, the decor is very American modern—there's a place in our house for teenagers, sports fans and newborns alike."

The couple recently welcomed the newest addition, Jack, to their family. They transformed what was once a guest room into a nursery with baby blue walls, bright white furniture and an overstuffed couch. "We hope he'll someday love what we've done as much as we do," Sanene says.

"One of my favorite original pieces in the home is the stained glass in the floor-to-ceiling

sliding door off the courtyard," Sanene says. Her great-grandmother designed the bamboo pattern and had it custom-made in the 1970s. In addition to two large sliding doors, the courtyard is surrounded by floor-to-ceiling windows that display the relaxed interior of the home.

When Ken moved into the residence, he brought along a collection of sports memorabilia. Three large paintings of New York Yankees players occupy the far living room wall and are framed by bookcases which house other sports souvenirs and family photos. A historical stadium chair, obtained from the former Yankee Stadium, sits nearby. The eclectic mix of contemporary decorating styles and colors in the home creates a family-friendly atmosphere. Sanene notes, "At the end of the day, I can truly say we've made this house our home."



FAMILY FACTS:
James and Judy Montgomery
DAY JOB: James is in the homebuilding industry; Judy is a tutor.
SPACE: 3,600 square feet, five bedrooms, four baths
HOUSE TIMELINE: Built in 1980, purchased in 1982
FABULOUS FEATURE: Ten large windows span the front of the house, showcasing the ocean view.



DECOR DISCOVERIES

Judy Montgomery is well rooted in this area: Her sister is just across the cul-de-sac and her parents lived in Emerald Bay for more than 40 years. “We love Emerald Bay because of the camaraderie and sense of community you find here,” Judy explains.

“When we were growing up in San Marino, we’d always come down this way for a visit, even when my parents weren’t living here full time,” Judy says while sitting at the sizeable wooden kitchen table where she typically tutors her students. The Montgomerys moved to Emerald Bay in the early 1980s after Judy’s husband, James, finished his time in the Navy and took a job with the Irvine Co.

The two-level, Spanish-style home boasts a generous view of the Pacific Ocean and the picturesque beach from large windows spanning the face of the house. The soft white and yellow walls

reflect the comfortable airiness of the home.

“The only thing we’ve remodeled since we’ve lived here is the flooring in the master bedroom,” Judy explains. “The original tiles were replaced with travertine. Other than that, the structure is the same as it always has been—we’ve decorated in our own unique style.”

Judy frequently fills the home with furniture and decor she finds at consignment stores and through friends. Much of the home also features art from Africa (one of her daughters lived there for some time). Honey-colored oak floors complement much of the first level, including the dining area, living area and office. A sunken, casual living room, accented with whites and reds, and a formal living area with touches of navy and dark wood are separated by a dual-sided wet bar and two fireplaces.

The sparkly, wrought iron chandelier dangling over the expansive dining table grabs one’s eye immediately. “I like to change things up,” Judy explains. “This room’s decor has changed quite a bit, depending on the season or what I’ve found on my hunts.”

The loft-like master bedroom is housed on the top floor, showcasing equally impressive views and sunlight levels. Three additional cozy bedrooms, perfect for their children and grandchildren’s visits, and a wine cellar/storage area are found on the full, finished basement level. Many of the walls of the home are filled with sentimental art pieces created by the couple’s family.

The outdoor area also receives much attention. “I love to garden,” Judy says. “I spend a lot of time outside in the entry space and around front.” **LBM**

REAL ESTATE *Showcase*



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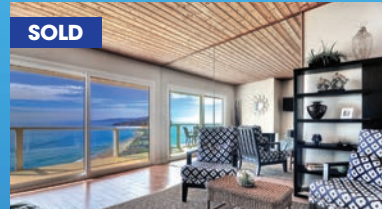
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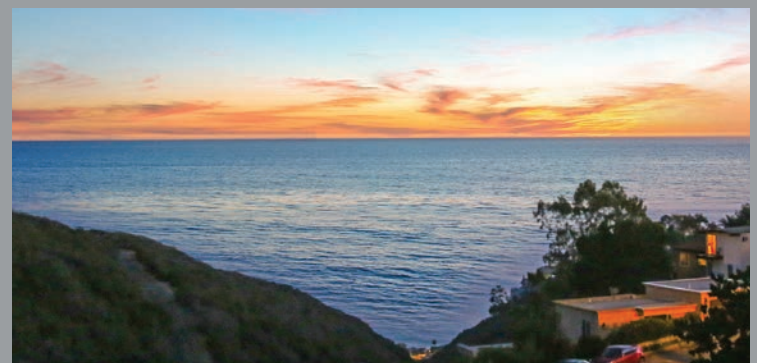
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Located on one of the best streets in the Village of Laguna Beach...at the top of Seaview. Two charming cottages on one lot. One is a 1BD/1BA with vaulted ceilings, the other is a 1BD/2BA and den with ocean views. Large lot, almost 5,000 sq. ft. Very private, gated lot, with good off street parking.



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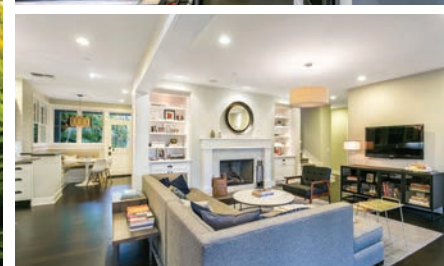
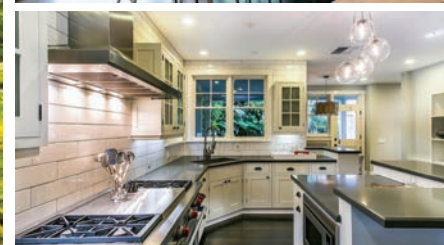
There is nothing that compares with this fabulous, remodeled view home in the heart of the Village! The Gregg Abel design for the remodel involved both structural changes with larger view windows and doors supported by steel beam headers, expanded Mangara wood decks in both the front and rear of the house as well as designer landscaping and outdoor lighting.

The interior is open and spacious with a granite trimmed fireplace in the living room as well as custom cherry wood cabinets and shelves that combine visual beauty with multiple storage and display possibilities. The doors and windows provide panoramic views of the ocean and Catalina from all of the main living areas of the home as well as the master bedroom and bath. A Marcel Wander custom chandelier soars above the entry and Roche Bobois lights illuminate the dining area. The bathrooms all have Porcelanosa imported Spanish tile and custom lighting and the kitchen is host to a 6 burner Wolff stove and a Subzero refrigerator as well as a Miele dishwasher and custom granite. The size, quality of construction and fabulous outdoor space as well as the views contribute to the present and future value of this beautiful home.

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339 AGATE STREET, LAGUNA BEACH

\$3,200,000

A newer custom home in the Woods Cove area of Laguna Beach, California. This home is located on a very large flat lot (street to alley) with easy access on all sides of the home. In the front yard is a large grass area with a garden. Upon entering from the front gate your eyes expand to the gardens and covered verandas to the Dutch front door entry. The front entry opens up into the living and great room with a separate dining room and garden views. The breakfast nook off the kitchen offers a warm and charming dining experience with views of the manicured rear yard. The large parcel of land provides privacy to the home. The oversized 2 car garage with motorized rear gate has direct access into the home.

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WHY LAGUNA BEACH USES KEVEN STIRDIVANT

Mastery requires absolute perfection. May I introduce myself as an older fellow that has endured at least 50 realtors in my life, most not hitting a 3 or 4 on a scale of 10.

Keven Stirdivant is a 10. Keven cold called me many years ago. He was kind and direct. There was something in his voice that caused me to re-think selling our home. Keven encouraged me to give him a one time "week end" listing, which began a relationship that has brought immense satisfaction to me, and I hope, to Keven.

Keven sold our home...twice. This is embarrassing for me, but this story will show you the caliber of Keven's character. The first sale I cancelled less than a week prior to close, as personal problems erupted. Keven was unbelievably sincere in taking my call and getting the word to the very disappointed buyer.

Years went by, but we remained "in touch". Keven's business really took off, but you never knew it by his demeanor. My friend listed and sold his home with Keven in Newport Beach and despite some awkward moments with the buyer that Keven handled beautifully, my friend glows about Keven's capability to find buyers and close the sale.

Awhile back Keven was again on our street, this time handing out flyers to our neighborhood. With him were several determined, elegant, nice young men. They were learning the business from Keven and ate up his every word. They told me when Keven was not around that Keven was the best thing that had happened to them...in their life, as his knowledge was vast and his ability to communicate so clear. They were thrilled to be working and learning from him.

What surprised me about these young men was their ability to relate to me in a genuine, realistic sense, which they said they learned from Keven. It was a shock to feel their sincerity and I kept them around to inquire about how they learned to become engaging. As I have learned from my many years, it is not so much what you know, it is what you do with what you know that matters.

Keven, and his team which at last count seemed to be around 20 real estate experts, leads by example...from his heart. He gets results because he listens and he cares. And he seems to hire people that want to learn to listen and care.

" My endorsement of Keven Stirdivant is this: Keven is one of the most ambitious, capable, fair, generous, hard working people you will ever meet. His heart and his talents line up to best serve his clients. While he may look boyish, don't be fooled by his youthful good looks. He has been learning and teaching college level real estate courses for years. He does not sit back and direct; he personally makes 50 phone calls a day and visits many...he trains by example...and he gets results. "

And the best thing about Keven is that he is humble...and has an amazing wife and family.

For my real estate needs the only number I call is Keven's. It should be yours too!

Dave Thorpe
Laguna Beach



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Wild Wednesdays

There's a new boozy hangout spot for the after-work crowd. In late January, Las Brisas launched its live music happy hour with the goal of reconnecting with Laguna locals. Every Wednesday from 5-9 p.m., bar-goers can enjoy \$2 off wine (from the new wine menu), sangria and Wyland's Whale Tail: a blue, ocean-inspired margarita made with Tres Sietes tequila and garnished with a piece of citrus that mimics a whale's tail in the water. All proceeds from sales of the specialty cocktail go to the nonprofit Wyland Foundation, which educates children and families about the importance of healthy oceans and waterways. Wyland's artwork can be seen throughout the redesigned bar and lounge area, where more seating has been added to accommodate the happy hour crowds. The full menu, including appetizers, is also available. (949-497-5434; lasbrisaslagunabeach.com) —*Katherine Duncan*



Proceeds from sales of the Whale Tail margarita at Las Brisas support the Wyland Foundation.

JODY TIONGCO



Peruvian-style crab and shrimp ceviche



Big Fish Tavern offers second-story views of the Pacific.



Thai-glazed calamari, made from local squid, comes garnished with carrots, bean sprouts and cilantro.

TAVERN BY THE BEACH

Under new ownership, the recently rechristened Big Fish has a revamped menu that emphasizes quality beers and bold flavors.

By Bria Balliet | Photos by Jody Tiongo

IT WAS A CLOSE CALL FOR BEER AND SEAFOOD FANS THIS past fall. After nearly shutting its doors, the beloved House of Big Fish and Ice Cold Beer was purchased in the 11th hour, saving Laguna from losing a prime dining location with second-story views of the Pacific.

Now called Big Fish Tavern, the eatery has done more than just change its name. A fiery new chef is at the helm with a trimmed down menu, and a refreshed interior reflects a high-end sports bar aesthetic with strategically placed TVs that allow patrons to watch the game while enjoying a craft brew.

To begin a meal here, the Peruvian-style crab and shrimp ceviche is a must. Pieces of crab and shrimp are tossed with avocado, corn, sweet potato, onion, peppers and lime juice before being scooped into a mason jar and served with corn tortilla chips. Light and refreshing, it highlights the quality of the seafood with a tangy kick, and is a great alternative to a typical chips and salsa starter. Equally satisfying is the Thai-glazed calamari: Made from locally sourced squid, the dish arrives lightly crisped and coated in a sweet glaze with carrots, bean sprouts and cilantro as garnish.

To wash down the appetizers, one of the eatery's beers on

tap will suffice. The Golden Road Brewing's Wolf Among Weeds India pale ale is a hoppy brew with notes of citrus and peach—it pairs well with most plates on the menu, including the gluten-free, spicy seafood chowder. Beginning with a tomato herb broth, vegetables like celery and potatoes join mussels, shrimp and freshly caught fish (which is also available in the evening special). The spice is prominent but not overpowering, and the fish is tender, but not so flaky that it falls apart in the soup.

Those who want something soothing rather than spicy will find satisfaction in the lobster meatball truffle risotto. Butter—lots of it—makes this one of the richest items on the menu, so it's a great plate for sharing. Tender risotto is folded with truffles, caramelized onions and Parmesan cheese. Typically topped with house-made lobster meatballs, the chef may substitute the fresh catch of the day (such as halibut from the coast of Catalina) for those who ask.

If the quality of its dishes is any indication, Big Fish Tavern has continued to be a mainstay on Laguna's culinary scene. Meanwhile, future plans for menu tweaks and high-tech, tableside speakers will keep patrons coming back to find out what's new at their old favorite restaurant. **LBM**

BIG FISH TAVERN

540 S. Coast Hwy., Ste. 200
949-715-4500
bigfishtavernlaguna.com

HOURS: Opens at 11:30 a.m., daily for lunch and dinner

TIP: Grab a seat on the restaurant's enclosed patio for some spectacular ocean views.



A refreshing white-grapefruit sorbet for a sweet finish



Salmon with fingerling potatoes and fennel salad



Seasonal ingredients star in the hamachi crudo with sugar snap peas, baby radishes and lemon dressing.

MEETING LOFTY EXPECTATIONS

Montage Laguna Beach's all-day restaurant offers fine dining in a comfortable atmosphere for vacationers, staycationers and those looking for a quick escape from everyday life.

By Linda Domingo | Photos by Jody Tiongco

PERCHED ON THE FOURTH FLOOR OF MONTAGE LAGUNA BEACH, The Loft could easily be outshone by the culinary sibling it overlooks. Studio restaurant, located a stone's throw away within the same resort, is a beacon in the Orange County fine dining scene; however, Chef de Cuisine Casey Overton and his team at The Loft create an elegant all-day experience that stands up to its five-star surroundings.

Using local ingredients whenever possible, The Loft's menu celebrates California cuisine with Casey's sophisticated yet simple approach. While he rotates many of the restaurant's plates and their accouterments with the seasons, the "less is more" philosophy is evident in starters like hamachi crudo with sugar snap peas, baby radishes and Meyer lemon dressing. In an equally fresh-tasting dish, Castroville artichoke soup is poured over crispy prosciutto, coco beans and confit garlic at the table, ensuring no flavors are lost in the journey from the kitchen.

Additionally, everything is elevated through one of the area's top wine programs. Diners can opt for a bottle, glass or expert pairings as recommended by a Montage sommelier, who scrutinizes the ingredients of each course to select a perfectly complementary varietal. Sommeliers are also happy to explain the wines' notes and origins tableside.

Dinner entrees are divided into three sections—harvest,

sea and land—that highlight coastal bounty, including salmon with fingerling potatoes and fennel salad; and braised lamb sugo, served with baby artichokes, Roman gnocchi and cured olives. The former takes a delicately curated mix of vegetables and anchors them with a surprisingly hearty cut of fish, while the latter provides a plate of pure comfort: tender, savory meat with warm pasta and a touch of acidity provided by the artichokes and olives.

Dessert takes on many forms at The Loft. A fromagerie can provide guidance to the cheese collection of more than 150 varieties, all of which can be paired with honeys, compotes, jams, nuts or fruit. For a traditional last course, the caramelized hazelnut cognac soufflé or fresh white-grapefruit sorbet are both standouts on a robust after-dinner menu. Or, forgo decisions with a dessert sampler of miniature tastings. Equally sweet sips, including ice wine, passito and apple ice cider, are available on the dessert libations menu to round out the evening.

The Loft's coveted outdoor seating provides spectacular views of the Montage Mosaic Pool with the Pacific in the background, which can also be enjoyed over breakfast, lunch or a quick cocktail; however, the restaurant's understated elegance and panorama are best savored over long evenings, multiple courses and too many glasses of wine. **LBM**

THE LOFT AT MONTAGE LAGUNA BEACH

30801 S. Coast Hwy.
949-715-6420
montagehotels.com/lagunabeach

HOURS:

6 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily

TIP: For yet another way to experience The Loft, the adjacent bar area, The Loft Bistro, has its own light menu that includes salads, small plates and casual entrees.



SOPHISTICATION *by the* SEA

Offering breathtaking views of the Pacific Ocean, Las Brisas is proud to serve the freshest seafood, exclusive offerings of wine & margaritas and authentic cuisine of the Mexican Riviera.



Garden Greens

A spring spent in the garden is relaxing, but also requires hard work and dedication. The best way to showcase the fruits (or vegetables) of your labor is with a crisp spring salad. Those looking for a new recipe that looks as good as it tastes may want to take a cue from Driftwood Kitchen Executive Chef Rainer Schwarz, who has created a colorful grilled shrimp salad with dates, gigante beans and sweet peppers. —*Bria Balliet*



To finish: Combine beans with the vinaigrette and plate. Place shrimp skewer with dates on top. Surround with pepper sauce and garnish with greens.

SHRIMP AND DATE SALAD

Servings: 5

GIGANTE BEANS

16 ounces gigante beans, cooked and soaked overnight in water
1 cup lemon vinaigrette
1 tablespoon garlic
1 cup cucumber, diced
½ cup piquillo peppers, diced
1 cup cilantro, chopped
Juice from 2 lemons
Salt and pepper to taste

Fill a large pot with approximately 5 cups of water. Add beans and cook over low heat until tender. Drain and combine with remaining ingredients. Set aside.

SHRIMP SKEWERS

10 large shrimp, peeled and de-veined
8 dates, pitted
Chimichurri marinade

Soak five wooden skewers in water, then skewer shrimp with dates and marinate in chimichurri. Grill on low heat until shrimp are fully cooked. Set aside.

LEMON VINAIGRETTE

2 cups lemon juice
3 cups grape seed oil
2 bunches thyme, stemmed
2 tablespoons garlic salt
Pepper, to taste

In a bowl, mix oil and lemon juice. Add thyme, garlic salt and pepper and blend. Set aside.

PEPPER SAUCE

3 red bell peppers, whole
Olive oil, salt and pepper to taste
1 small container (approximately 7 ounces) of Fage plain Greek yogurt

Dust peppers with salt and pepper and roast, covered, until pepper skin detaches from the flesh. Remove skin and blend with remaining ingredients until smooth.

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340 S. Coast Hwy.; 949-494-8088;
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WINE GALLERY

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JODY TONGICO

Starfish's Imperial Garden

HERBAL SIPS

Come springtime, restaurants are busy concocting new items that make the most of the season's bounty. Fresh salads highlighting crisp vegetables and desserts featuring juicy fruits are aplenty. Adding another dimension to Laguna's garden-fresh menus are the invigorating herbal cocktails that mixologists have crafted to complement such plates. And, with essential oils, vitamins and disease-preventing properties, an herbal kick to your cocktail is an addition you can feel good about. Try a few of our top picks for spring.

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WATERMARC'S BACK SEAT: The simple combination of muddled melon vodka, watermelon and mint is both sweet and cool on a warm spring day. (949-376-6272; watermarcrestaurant.com)

THREE SEVENTY COMMON KITCHEN & DRINK'S THE SPA: A citrusy blend of gin and basil gets a floral infusion thanks to lavender bitters. (949-494-8686; 370common.com)

STARFISH'S IMPERIAL GARDEN: Aptly named, this mix features a blend of spicy Thai basil, cool mint and bright cilantro for a bold flavor profile. (949-715-9200; starfishlaguna.com) —*B.B.*

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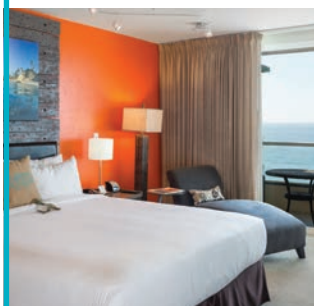
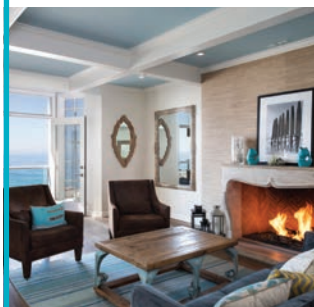
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THROUGH THE DIGITAL LENS

Gallery owner Ludo Leideritz and artist Brooke Shaden have contrasting views on digital photography, but both agree the most important aspect of a picture is simply the vision behind it.

Section by Ashley Ryan



"Bristlecone #3" by Ludo Leideritz

LUDO LEIDERITZ FOREST & OCEAN GALLERY

After studying photography for 40-plus years, the Forest & Ocean Gallery owner has seen how digital advancements have altered the art form, calling it "a wonderful tool when used properly."

Though Ludo still prefers to shoot using film, he uses digital tools to make adjustments to troublesome images and to enlarge negatives. "Digital photography and manipulation almost go hand-in-hand," he explains.

"... What one needs to understand is that a manipulated image in and of itself does not constitute art. It is the vision coupled with a refined skill set that enables an artist to create an image that transcends the obvious and everyday."

Though digital manipulation is easier than it once was, it's not a new skill. "Ansel [Adams] post-processed almost all his images in the darkroom through steps that he mastered," Ludo says, explaining that an image shot with film can be altered in the same way as a digital image—with a little more work.

"The flip side is the overreaching of making thousands of images and not thinking artistically about the image," Ludo adds. "Contemplation before pressing the shutter [button] makes for a thoughtful image. Banging out hundreds of pictures makes for a few—perhaps—interesting images. Unfortunately, digital imaging defers to the less thoughtful approach [of] ... quantity versus quality." Although film has more tonality and is able to capture more, Ludo recognizes that high-end digital cameras come very close to capturing an image the way a film camera would.

Several artists in Ludo's gallery work mainly with digital photography—and sometimes film as well. Catch images by Ron Azevedo, Robert Hansen and Tom Lamb at Forest & Ocean throughout March and April. (949-371-3313; forestoceangallery.com)



"The Gift of Time" by Brooke Shaden

BROOKE SHADEN JOANNE ARTMAN GALLERY

This Arizona-based artist works almost exclusively with digital photography, but views the digital process as very similar to that of film. "I think that people who are truly aiming to create art often create in much the same way as people always have," Brooke says. "There are many ways to experiment now in Photoshop, yet the same is true of the darkroom and the same is true of painting, sculpture and so on. So much of what we do is elaboration on what we already know, so I think that no matter what the technology or medium, we will continue to put vision first."

Brooke explains that the biggest difference between digital and film photography is the process to get the finished image. "Film requires you to be very precise in your vision, so many film photographers [focus on] vision and technique more heavily before clicking the camera because the clicks are more limited," she says. "This is why I like to shoot digital like I shoot film. I try to discipline myself by limiting how many images I take during a session to make sure that I am planning and really thinking my idea through."

According to Brooke, after the images are taken, post-processing crafted on a computer is not all that different from using a darkroom. "The process is different, of course—more hands on, more surprise—but the essence is the same: ... How can I take this image and make it something more?"

That enhancement is Brooke's specialty. She typically shoots photos on location, then later manipulates and stitches them together with other images. "For me, it allows a vision that cannot exist in reality to come alive," she says. "I think that it opens up a new way of expressing the imagination and I think that, if it is not yet, it will soon be accepted as a true art form."

View Brooke's photographs locally at JoAnne Artman Gallery, where she is a resident artist. Her complex digital images are manipulated and crafted into something timeless, surreal and dreamlike.
(949-510-5481;
joanneartmangallery.com)

HELPING YOUTH VIA ART

The Laguna Gallery of Contemporary Art is launching a new project aimed at teens and young adults. The gallery's artists consistently give back to an array of charities through events that serve as a way to educate and help those in need. This new campaign will feature a couple of artists each month, showcasing new works that follow a monthly theme. "My goal as art director is to help our children have a more fulfilling, happy and love-filled life," says Christiana Lewis. Throughout March, Karen Petty and Mark Jesinoski will illustrate body image and matters of the heart; in April, Joseph Moscoso and Diana Carey will focus on the importance of young adults finding their passion. (949-715-9604; lgoca.com)



"Mindful Malaise" by Mark Jesinoski



Watercolors on the Beach is one of many art workshops offered by LOCA.

COMMUNITY ARTISTS

It's easy to fall in love with works of art, but difficult to duplicate them with no artistic knowledge. Find your own style with Laguna Outreach for Community Arts, a coalition of local professional artists and art educators that offer workshops at community centers with a focus on acrylics, drawing, painting, collage, jewelry, mixed media and more. In March, options include Senior Art Escapes (ages 50 and over) in printmaking and a workshop on sea lion sculpture; April's sessions include Watercolors on the Beach and 50 Shades of Green. (949-363-4700; locaarts.org)

a&g

ARTISTS AND GALLERIES

GALLERY EVENTS

COASTAL EDDY, A GALLERY

The gallery is extending its “Recent Works” showcase, partnering with the Veterans Art Project to tell the stories of local military veterans. Both veterans and active duty personnel are invited to participate in a free ceramics activity at Saddleback College in Mission Viejo or bronze casting at the California Sculpture Academy in Fallbrook; the pieces will be displayed through the end of March. (949-715-4113; coastaleddygallery.com)

EXCLUSIVE COLLECTIONS GALLERY

Painter Gabe Leonard will appear at Exclusive Collections for two days to meet local fans and discuss his work. Gabe’s cinematic paintings bring to life desperados and their sultry female counterparts. The free event will be held March 14 from 6-9 p.m., and March 15 from 1-4 p.m. (949-715-8747; ecgallery.com)

JOANNE ARTMAN GALLERY

Painter and sculptor America Martin presents new works in a solo exhibit titled “How the Sun Goes.” America’s modern style mixes with her Columbian heritage to create a vibrant, abstract body of work. Her new pieces, on display until March 31, will include the ever-present portraits of indigenous people and musicians. (949-510-5481; joanmartmangallery.com)

ORANGE COUNTY CREATIVES

Four new artists—Hadden Spotts, Ramya Sarveshwar, Kathie Warren and Erika Morozaita—are bringing their talents to Orange



“Peony” by Vivien Ide at Quorum Gallery

County Creatives. The first three started in February while Erika begins March 15. In addition, the gallery will host its next international juried show, “Faces,” which will showcase a selection of pieces based on this theme. The opening reception is planned for April 2 during the First Thursdays Art Walk. (978-473-9658; orangecountycreativesgallery.com)

QUORUM GALLERY

Throughout the month of April, the Quorum Art Gallery will feature oil and watercolor paintings by Vivien Ide. Her landscapes and botanical paintings allow her to intertwine organic objects and the effects of natural light. The detail and precision of her work lends itself to a new series of still lifes of antique tools. (949-494-4422; quorumgallery.com)

STUDIO 7 GALLERY

Katie Costello, April’s featured artist, will display old and new works of art, all of which incorporate her use of bold brushstrokes and pops of

color. As a plein-air painter, Katie finds inspiration in the people she meets in the great outdoors. She attempts to bring her awe of nature to the viewer, inspiring them to see beauty in everything. (949-497-1080; studio7gallery.com)

THE SIGNATURE GALLERY

Oil paintings by German native Jenny Simon are displayed in the “Love & Harmony Show” with a visit from the artist herself kicking off opening night. On April 2, visit the gallery to meet Jenny and catch a glimpse of her latest works while enjoying live music and cocktails. Her abstract ripples technique and “Sea Day” series have caught the eye of collectors worldwide. (949-376-4244; thesignaturegallery.com)

TOWNLEY GALLERY

The gallery will feature artwork from resident artists during the months of March and April. Artists include Townley, Manss, Nisperos, Olga, Russo, Skaggs, Leeming, Thuy and Sidd. (949-715-1860; townleygallery.com) LBM

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A PIECE FROM OUR PAST

HOTEL LAGUNA

By Laguna Beach Magazine Staff



Above: Hotel Laguna was rebuilt two months after opening due to a fire (1888). Right: A present-day view

HOTEL LAGUNA, THE ROMANTIC WHITE BUILDING WITH Spanish-style arches and a rooftop bell tower on South Coast Highway, didn't always look like this; the current building was dedicated in 1930 after several reconstructions. The original structure burned down two months after opening, but was rebuilt in 1888 and proved successful in renting rooms to the many visitors who flocked to this picturesque seaside community. After changing hands a few times, the hotel was purchased in the mid-1890s by Joe and Kate Yoch, who had built a cottage on the beach and worked with other owners to install a boardwalk. The Yochs also bought the Arch Beach Hotel (constructed by Hubbard Goff in 1886) and moved the two properties together at the current site by the southeast end of Main Beach Park. They called it the New Hotel Laguna and it was visited by celebrities such as actress Helena Modjeska, after whom the Modjeska Canyon was named. In the late 1920s, however, the board-and-batten hotel was condemned and demolished because it was believed to be a fire hazard. It was replaced with a new building, which still stands today as a beloved Laguna landmark. *LBM*

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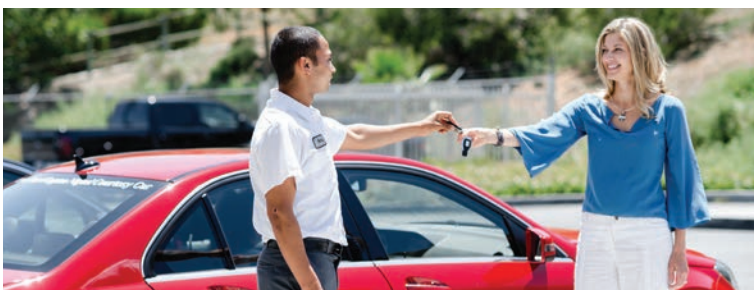
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