MILA KUNIS NAILS IT! in Third Person

restaurant review
GIRASOL

MORGAN PAGE
NOT YOUR TYPICAL EDM DJ

WORLD CUP '14

PREVIEW:

SPOTLIGHT:
LA SINGER/SONGWRITER
PRISCILLA AHN

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ON THE COVER
Morgan Page photographed by Rafael Orellana on June 9, 2014 in Los Angeles.
Styling by Jaclyn Joan Kullberg
Grooming by Brenda Koo
Letter From the Editor

Los Angeles has always represented adventure, freedom and passion to me. Growing up in Orange County, Calif., I always looked forward to family excursions to eat at the Original Farmers’ Market, window shop on Rodeo Drive, see relatives in Pasadena or walk the same footsteps my maternal grandfather once did through Little Tokyo. In high school, friends and I would relish our first taste of independence in “the city,” driving up to go to dinner (and sing along with the waiters) at Ed Debevic’s on La Cienega or to see concerts at Dodger Stadium and the Rose Bowl. When I turned 17 and enrolled at USC, Los Angeles became my home. It’s where countless sunsets were admired from the sands of Venice Beach, blurry nights spent on the Sunset Strip, my love for music continued to grow and I discovered that my one true talent was writing.

Living Out Loud is a magazine about Los Angeles – the entertainment industry that is its backbone, its cultural landmarks and the citizens that make every one of its neighborhoods unique. In this premiere issue, we visit Downtown’s Bradbury Building and the Last Bookstore, as well as Studio City’s Girasol restaurant where executive chef CJ Jacobson crafts edible works of art from local ingredients. We speak with Angelenos like director Paul Haggis and actress Mila Kunis about their upcoming film, Third Person; standup comedian and “TMZ” personality Brian McDaniel; singer-songwriter Priscilla Ahn; and, also from the music world, our cover subject, Morgan Page.

Although Morgan’s not an L.A. native, the DJ, remixer, songwriter, radio presenter and producer represents what it means to be Angeleno. He followed his dreams to the West Coast, honed his craft and relentlessly worked to get his songs heard. The passion he has always had for music can be felt through the songs he creates. It permeates his live performances and is ultimately what has made him so successful. That fire, that hunger to share a talent with others, is what drives so many to Los Angeles, and it creates an energy that’s always in the air.

I hope that these pages, and all of our upcoming issues, inspire you to have more adventures exploring the city, to pursue whatever passions burn in your heart, to live out loud.
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Ever since the 1990s, we’ve seen Mila Kunis portray different roles in television shows and movies. Nothing has been as powerful as her performance as Julia in Paul Haggis’ Third Person.

The film depicts the passion, confidence and deception of three different relationships simultaneously taking place in New York, Paris and Rome, and features an all-star cast that includes Liam Neeson, Olivia Wilde, James Franco, Adrien Brody, Kim Basinger, Maria Bello and Moran Atias.

“You have three characters, and you see three actresses playing three characters who are all in one way trying to protect a child,” describes Haggis.

Bello acknowledges that Haggis’ script, which took him about three years to write, is unique.

“Paul has an extraordinary script,” she says. “It’s about so many things, but really, in essence, it is about love – romantic love, familial love, mother-son love. What moved me and was the idea of parental love and how that works with all the other relationships in our lives. How, in the end, for me it is the most important love of all, between me and my son.”

Haggis wanted to make all of the characters as real and normal as possible.

“It was important to me that they were human,” he says. “This [film was] casted really well … the challenge here was that no one tried to be liked. That’s the bravery of these actors and actresses.”

This is the first time that both Angelenos (Kunis and Haggis) were able to work together on a film. Kunis’ Julia is a single mother living in New York, struggling to find an identity and keep a job for more than one week.

“Sometimes being unlikeable makes you likeable, makes you human,” reveals Kunis. “I don’t think that anybody ever goes into a character saying, ‘I can’t play a character because they’re not likeable.’ People are different because of the mistakes they make and how they function after they make those mistakes. That’s what makes everybody special.”

“My character is incredibly sympathetic and likeable,” adds Kunis. “I actually think all of the characters are.”

In Third Person, Julia is charged with the attempted murder of her son. There’s one scene in specific where the audience sees Kunis deliver an unbelievably dramatic performance: She’s in a discussion with her ex-husband, Rick (Franco), who pressures her to confess to the act. Julia confesses, and Rick promptly drags her out of his home while roughly pulling her legs up in the air, throwing her on the floor, reducing her to tears.

Kunis, who has typically played softer characters in the past, enjoyed this intense role. She says it wasn’t that difficult for her, since Haggis gave her the liberty of exploring the opportunity.

“It wasn’t hard for me to figure out a way to get to a place where I took the character and then just straightened her emotional roller-coaster ride,” admits Kunis. “I may not have had a child that I lost, but it doesn’t take away from my experiences that I have had in my life that were equivalent to that emotional depth. It was great [that] Paul allowed me to explore it.”

It was the director who first attracted her to the film, and it was Haggis who made the experience so fulfilling.

“I loved it. First of all, I wanted to work with Paul, and then reading the script and having it not be a ‘girl next door’ character was a relief,” she says. “You go and do a movie with the director and they make you do a character every which way because they don’t trust themselves, they don’t trust you and they want to ultimately do what I call ‘Frankenstein you’ and make a character they feel comfortable with six months later. Paul is the opposite. Paul trusts you, empowers you and gives you this great character to play with. Then you can live it for a little while and have this really great therapy session with this character.”

Haggis explains his advantages in working with such a talented group of people, including Kunis.

“The wonderful thing about working with very skilled actors is that you turn the camera on and you watch,” says Haggis. “You want really brave actors and actresses, and that’s what I have here. That’s what I have in the cast. If you aren’t brave, you aren’t an artist. These are artists.”

And, for the record, Third Person just might turn out to be a piece of art.

In theaters June 20

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**Mila Kunis Shows Off Her Acting Chops in Paul Haggis’ Third Person**

By Marvin Vasquez

Mila Kunis portrays different roles in television shows and movies. Nothing has been as powerful as her performance as Julia in Paul Haggis’ Third Person.

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In theaters June 20
William Eubank's *The Signal* is a genre mash-up, combining an indie road-trip story with hard sci-fi elements. From the get-go it sounds like an interesting premise, as I've never seen or really thought about what an indie-drama-sci-fi would look like. To my disappointment, it's not a great image, at least not for this picture.

The film opens on three twenty-somethings, a couple and their friend, making their way to California in a station wagon. It's never really clear why they are going to California, only that the girl, Hayley ("Bates Motel"'s Olivia Cooke), needs to get there.

There isn't much dialogue, giving us just enough info to justify the action of the film as it happens. We don't really know who these people are, where specifically they are going or why. They are just doing things, and I am supposed to believe the things are important and dramatic – which is decidedly not dramatic.

Because there is so little information exchange between characters, it’s difficult to really care about them or what’s happening to them. The main tension of the first half of the movie deals with the breakup between Haley and Nic (*Maleficent*'s Brenton Thwaites), a plotline that has enough going on in it and a slow enough pace to warrant its own movie.

Opening with a breakup is a difficult thing to do since we don’t know either of these characters yet. The only chance for it to work is if more is revealed about them as time progresses or if the character is so likeable we don’t care about anything besides watching them. Unfortunately, *The Signal* does neither of these things, and so the breakup and general opening to the film falls flat.

Like I mentioned before, the film has some issues with tone and, arguably, its own identity. The sluggish first act is followed by an even slower second act, changing setting to an underground government facility. At this point, the change is welcome, though the facility quickly grows tiresome. What’s supposed to feel like an abandoned, lightly run facility ends up feeling over-lit and extremely stagey.

There must be at least six or seven people in hazmat suits working there, yet only Laurence Fishburne has lines. I get that Eubank was going for the solitude vibe, but it just doesn’t work in this case. Instead, it leaves me wondering whether those actors are capable of delivering lines. Ultimately, it was a problem of being there too long; not long enough to stand as a film of its own, but too long for it to be a working part of another story.

A lot of what ailed this film, besides the tone issues and lack of story/motivation, was the budget. Though I’ve been railing on the indie elements, the sci-fi elements worked well the few times they were showed. The scarcity of the sci-fi was no doubt a direct result of the paltry $2 million budget.

Now the indie elements are starting to make sense. Eubank opts to make his sci-fi vision 70-percent indie drama in order to cut costs and concentrate the rest of the budget into one balls-out sequence at the end that lasts not nearly long enough. It’s also placed at the tail end of the film, making you wait until the very last second to reap the rewards of your patience. The effects are worth the wait for that last set piece, but there just isn’t enough of it.

When it isn’t being a high-concept sci-fi thriller, the camerawork does its best to make up for the rest of its shortcomings. Though it’s shot beautifully, the film relies on the cinematography so much that the direction at times feels tacky. For instance, when Fishburne’s character pulls a gun out of a padded briefcase; it’s a cool image, and the briefcase adds suspense to the gun reveal, but for the most part it’s a silly image and hard to justify, especially since the only reason it was done was because it looked cool. There isn’t anything wrong going down the hyper-stylized route, but you need to commit to it, otherwise it comes across as tacky. As it stands, the film takes itself too seriously as a romantic drama, creating a split between ultra-style and pensive storytelling – a divide that’s hard to take seriously.

I admire what he was trying to do in merging both genres, but in this case, its premise is strong enough that it doesn’t need the genre mash. The additional indie-ness doesn’t do anything to enhance the narrative, which makes me wonder why it was in there at all. Based on the story alone, *The Signal* could’ve easily existed as a straight sci-fi, which leads me to believe Eubank was more interested in alternative storytelling than telling a good one.

I’m sure budget played a role, but considering all the tonal issues and lack of motivation, it’s clear that he should have paid more attention in writing the script than creating the film. I’m pretty sure the former is free.

*3 Stars*
Did you see “The Mountain and the Viper” episode of “Game of Thrones”? It’s Tuesday night, I’m watching the rolling credits of the show, and the room is silent save for the churning sounds coming from somewhere within my midsection. Whether you’ve seen the series or not, it has garnered a reputation for its high production value, winding twists and biblical displays of violence. Four seasons deep, we aren’t so much shocked by it anymore, but come to expect it. We wait in anticipation, conjuring theories and nightmares of how they will top their latest show of hyper-realistic, grizzly mutilation.

But, was it always like this? When did TV become dark and daring? How did it suddenly become the better medium for creative storytelling over film? Not long ago, in the early ’90s, television was, for the most part, episodic rather than serial. That is to say, any episode could stand alone as its own story and did not rely on other episodes to provide context. Think of dramas like “ER,” “CSI,” “NYPD BLUE”; each episode had a case or puzzle to solve that began and was resolved within it, the characters being the only common threads between episodes. Networks made piles of money from syndication, which thrives on reruns, especially in the global market (Countries all over the world still air reruns of all the aforementioned dramas.). Unlike episodic programming, serialized television didn’t work as reruns unless you had seen the preceding episode. Subsequently, serial narratives took the back seat to episodic programming, though it wouldn’t stay that way much longer.

In 1997, the transformation commenced. That summer, HBO aired its first hourlong, original dramatic series, “Oz,” chronicling the day-to-day of Oswald State Correctional Facility’s most notorious inmates. Though each episode focused on a theme or virtue, it had a largely serial plot structure and most importantly, lacked ads. Without sponsors or regulatory forces like the FCC, it played uninterrupted and uncensored. This was the start to a long and complex evolution in television programming that still hasn’t culminated. “Oz” was as dark and vicious as “Game of Thrones” at its best, setting the tone in providing unadulterated, quality creative. And so, the Metamorphosis continued.

In 1999, David Chase’s “The Sopranos” debuted on the network, completely changing the landscape of TV programming. Continuing the precedent set by “Oz,” “The Sopranos” was allowed to explore a very specific story, a darker, more mature one. The lack of sponsors gave them the freedom from having to conform to broad appeal, cultivating the path for other notable shows to continue its legacy in elite programming, including “The Wire,” “Breaking Bad” and “Mad Men.”

The showrunners responsible for those shows – David Simon, Vince Gilligan, and Matthew Weiner, respectively – helped string together a 15-year stretch of premium television that served to solidify this metamorphosis, shifting from episodic to serialized, hopes and heroes to darkness and anti-heroes. Its popularity fueled networks to pursue serialized shows, so FX picked up programs like “The Shield,” “Rescue Me” and “Nip/Tuck,” becoming the one non-subscription channel that produced similar programming. Though this new tone appealed to people, it took a while before the industry acknowledged its value, making it increasingly difficult to push serialized content outside of subscription models like HBO.

Simon, creator of “The Wire,” spent many years as a journalist, researching the war on drugs and its effect in urban Baltimore communities. He spent a year shadowing local detectives, which led to a book and a TV deal with NBC to adapt it into a procedural (“Homicide: Life on the Street”). Unsatisfied with the network model, he created the HBO mini-series “The Corner,” the pre-cursor and inspiration for what would become “The Wire.” Similarly, it wasn’t until AMC found success with...
their 2006 hit mini-series “Broken Trail” that they found interest in their own original programming. Suddenly they had a wad of cash and a new level of prestige. Determined to rebrand, they threw everything they could at content acquisition, focusing on story rather that commercial appeal. That year, they picked up “Mad Men,” a pilot written by a “Sopranos” staff writer that had been floating around town for the better part of a decade. The next season, they picked up “Breaking Bad,” fortifying their spot as the network source for elite content.

As the popularity of these shows grew, so did their commercial viability. Because of the Internet's rapid expansion and unexpected reach into TV, ads are becoming harder and harder to force onto viewers, in turn making them less reliable as sources of revenue. It's actually changing the way we watch TV, with many viewers preferring to binge-watch episodes at one time rather than wait a week apart. Services like Netflix are beginning to release entire seasons of shows all at once ("House of Cards," "Orange Is the New Black"), giving the viewer freedom to watch at their own pace and leisure, uninterrupted by any external irritants. This shift in behavior spurred even the big networks into serialized television, (NBC’s “Hannibal,” “The Black List”). Look at the difference in how many serialized shows there are now versus five years ago; series like “Game of Thrones,” “The Americans,” “True Detective,” “Masters of Sex” and “Fargo.” They're all afforded the freedom to creatively pursue whatever the story dictates because of this new mandate. Though, obviously, the majority can’t and won’t compare to gold standards like “The Sopranos” and “Breaking Bad,” they still bring a level of entertainment that far exceeds that of the episodic era.

There is a caveat though. As with all success, it’s prone to exploitation. There was a 10-year period of enlightenment from about 2000-2010 where certain shows boldly pushed forward while the competition kept the status quo. Those 10 years served as a vacuum for the elite shows to gestate and develop. There was liberation in what they were doing, a rebellious spirit. Toward the end of that decade, executives started to catch on that these might be more than just critically popular, they could be commercially huge. Since then, every channel—broadcast or otherwise—is clamoring to find their "Sopranos."

Even AMC, the network in which the expansion movement was born, is struggling to find shows to replace the juggernauts that made them. But the magic of the vacuum is gone, that feeling of pioneering missing, now replaced with half-hearted imitations. Shows like “Low Winter Sun” and “Hell on Wheels” were attempts to hold their place among the elite, though they failed to capture the same spirit of its predecessors. But how could they? The genius of those first shows came from their desperation, from having a vision that needed to be told but wasn’t allowed, from trying something new without a care for the risks or consequences. It's not the same anymore, and the attempts to bottle that magic have fallen short.

Much like independent film underwent its own commercialization over the last several years, so too is TV experiencing a new stage in its metamorphosis. Now that these darker serialized programs have proven themselves as popular and profitable, more companies/networks will do their best to churn out as many iterations as possible in the hopes of capturing that same magic, throwing together a hodgepodge of talent and quality that on paper should add up to a hit series. But they don’t. It’s because they’re looking in the wrong places, searching for the next best show rather than the next best showrunner. It’s the people behind the idea, the ones with the visions that are responsible for the sprawling works. It’s not something that can be achieved by acquiring a great script, hiring film directors and an experienced showrunner. That’s the formula for a solid show, not an elite one. It’s a formula that lacks the cohesion and singular vision of its creator, and in a long-form medium such as television, the changing of hands can be felt over the vast stretch of time. The lesson here? There is no formula for lightning. You can’t catch it in a bottle, you have to wait for it to strike.

BEST HORROR MOVIES
To Watch on Friday, the 13th
By Ariel Paredes

There is one thing that comes to mind when Friday the 13th approaches: scary movies! Use the day wisely by planning a Friday the 13th party with a selection of films from below.

1) A classic is 1978’s Halloween, directed by John Carpenter and starring Jamie Lee Curtis as a babysitter in peril. The musical score alone gives you goosebumps.

2) Jamie Lee Curtis’ mother, Janet Leigh, started it all off in Alfred Hitchcock’s Psycho in 1960. The slow build and being shot in black and white makes this film a classic.

3) The Exorcist was the first horror film nominated for an Academy Award. Directed by William Friedkin in 1973, the film showcased demonic possession in all its glory.

4) Jonathan Demme’s Silence of the Lambs (1991) was rooted in real-life terror. A cannibal held in lock up was used to help find another serial killer. “Claaairice” can send shivers down your spine.

5) British director Danny Boyle 2002’s 28 Days Later came out swinging with a frightening concept. Who isn’t afraid of a super-germ getting into our bloodstream, spreading rapidly and destroying mankind quicker than a cure can be found?

6) What’s wrong with taking a little bonding trip with your girlfriends and going on a camping adventure? Neil Marshall’s The Descent (2005) makes your rethink all of it.

7) Poltergeist (1982) from Tobe Hooper claims one of the most famous lines in all of horror history, “They’re back.” A family doesn’t realize that they bought a home on top of an ancient burial site.

8) The Strangers (2008) let you know that you aren’t even safe in your childhood summer home. Bryan Bertino creates chilling moments that nightmares are made from.

9) Director Oren Peli shot Paranormal Activity (2007) following the path of The Blair Witch Project, and home video. The film demonstrates that what you don’t always see can be the scariest.

10) Jaws (1975) made swimming feel unsafe. Steven Spielberg showed a great white shark could terrify a town of people and turn your once lovely vacation into a nightmare.
Los Angeles-based singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist Priscilla Ahn has always maintained her musical and cultural backgrounds as grounds for success. Her music comes from a creative mix of her passion for the acoustic sounds of indie-folk music and a love that was rooted in her father’s tastes.

“I grew up listening to a lot of the music my dad listened to, and that was artists like Bob Dylan and Neil Young, even the Beatles,” Ahn explains. “Then in high school, someone introduced me to Joni Mitchell, so I was very, very influenced by that kind of music growing up, acoustic guitar meets singer-songwriter music. That’s what introduced me to and got me inspired to write that kind of music.”

It was at age 14 that Ahn picked up a guitar and began performing in choirs and musical productions at Tulpehocken Area High School in Pennsylvania. Once she graduated, she decided to move to Los Angeles and pursue a career in the music industry – thanks to an idea instilled by her music teacher.

Eventually the folk singer was signed by Blue Note Records, and in 2008 her debut album, *A Good Day* (produced by Joey Waronker), was unveiled. A national tour followed the release, and it received approval from fans all over the world. Her second effort, *When You Grow Up*, was also released by Blue Note in 2011, but despite collaborations in the studio with artists like Inara George, Sia Furler, Eleni Mandell, Charlie Wadhams and Jake Blanton, Ahn was not as happy with the way the label handled promotions for this album.

It was her most recent album, *This Is Where We Are*, that pushed Ahn to break out of her shell as a musician. The album was released in Korea and Taiwan in 2013, and in the United States on Feb. 15, 2014. Inspiration for the album came from an excursion into the desert where the simplicity of her own experiences at the time gave *This Is Where We Are* life.

“A lot of my songs are about where my life is now. For a while after I got married four years ago, it was hard to write songs because writing songs for me was always like therapy. Whenever I was feeling alone, sad or upset, I reached for my guitar,” Ahn describes. “After I got married, I was in a happy place, and it was really hard for me to write songs because I felt like I didn’t need that therapy or outlet. So I really wanted to try and write an album about where I was in my life now. Songs that weren’t cheesy happy songs. I took a trip out to the desert, secluded myself and, instead of writing a lot of songs on the guitar, I got a keyboard and a computer setup and started writing on the keyboard with different sounds and beats.”

She combined her vocals with experimental, synthesized sounds.

By Britny Arevalo

Her move to more pop-like tunes and an exploration of newer themes on the album was accepted and supported by many.

“I really love the [album’s] first song, ‘Diana,’ because this song was such a departure musically and lyrically for me. It has a lot of electronic elements, but the song starts out with just my voice and a drum beat, which I think sounds really cool together. I’ve never done before,” a passionate Ahn reveals.

“Lyrically, there’s sort of a sexuality that’s more prevalent in the song and a few others that I never even tried to write about before because, as a female singer-songwriter, it can be a dangerous, sort of scary thing to do; writing songs with racy lyrics. You can quickly and easily be pigeon-holed in that genre, [but] I felt like I put out a couple of albums now that show who I am.”

From United States to Asia, Ahn has traveled a lot in her musical career thus far and has learned how different it can be to perform for the rows of fans who sellout her shows from country to country.

“It depends where I’m playing, lately it’s been a lot of Southern Asia, so the biggest difference for me there is the language barrier. If I play a show in L.A. or in the states, I tell stories in between my songs. If I’m playing in China, I don’t do that as much,” Ahn tells. “There is a little bit of a connection that’s lost, a connection for me personally.”

According to Ahn, her adopted hometown of Los Angeles has been

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Morgan Page spends countless hours in the studio of his L.A. home, an entirely solar-powered house in the hills, working on his music. Because he has a new album scheduled for release in October, an organized mess — made up of key-
boards, synthesizers and guitars (both electric and acoustic) — is lit-\ntered throughout his studio and around his desk, the way shiny gold cymbals of a drum kit surround Neil Peart before a Rush concert.

In a world where seemingly any-
one with a half-baked idea can re-
lease music and achieve some
notoriety, Page is a strict subscriber
to Malcolm Gladwell’s “10,000-
Hour Rule,” which calls for 10,000
hours of practice in order to achieve
success in a specific field.

“Think it takes that long to mas-
ter something,” says the two-time
Grammy-nominated progressive
house DJ, mixer and producer.
“That’s about three hours a day, for
less than 10 years. Everybody who
has had any significant amount of
success in something has done that.
I started [deejaying] when I was 12, and I’m not a quick learner. It’s
taken me a long time.”

Originally from Vermont, 33-
year-old Page came to Los Angeles
in the early 2000s determined to
make a career out of becoming a
DJ.

“Everyone is out here hustling
and trying to make it in their indus-
try, for the most part,” he says. “I re-
member people saying, ‘Oh, you’ll
hate L.A. Everyone’s so fake.’ You
know, all the cliché things [laughs].
But nobody really understands the
big picture.”

There is perhaps no genre in
music more symbiotic with hard-
partying than Electronic Dance
Music. EDM is used in movies and
television shows as the simplest and
most efficient way to segue into a
college party scene, something Page
admits has fueled much of the hype
over the genre.

“Electronic music was overdue
to break through,” he says. “There
had been these multiple waves
where electronic music was getting
big and didn’t break through, and
the difference [this time] was social
media and college kids accepting it
... you’d never picture frat boys
buying tickets to go to a rave. A lot
of the shows I do, fraternities will
buy up half the tickets and are sup-
porting the shows.”

But despite the party nature of
EDM, Page remains locked in on
perfecting his craft and rarely has
time for hobbies or leisure activi-
ties. Inconspicuous by nature, his
approach and his persona seem to
be at odds with the criteria that
make up a cookie-cutter EDM DJ.
He goes running or hiking when he
has the time, but he is more focused
on the “rabbit hole” that is EDM –
something that makes for long work
hours and little or no time for much
else.

“In the studio, I really try to
achieve music that gives you goose-
bumps or takes you to some sort of
mental state,” he says. “It’s hard to
re-do that kind of thing. All the
songs on the new album, I want
Continued on page 18...
“If [a song] doesn’t create that emotional reaction, then what’s the point of doing it?”
Local foursome Saint Motel have been bringing us Zombie Proms, bitchin’ shows and music that bounces from vintage pop and rock to Caribbean tunes and orchestral sounds. The outfit now prepares for their next adventure with a new label, new album and new singer. Just kidding! The group still consists of A/J Jackson (lead vocals/guitar), Aaron Sharp aka “a sharp” (lead guitar), Dak Lerdamormpong (bass) and Greg Erwin (drums). With more support in tow, they promise to offer continual madness and a louder sound.

For any band, being signed to one of the most successful record labels in the world would be incredibly amazing, so you can imagine Saint Motel’s delight to have signed with the legendary Parlophone Records, which has signed Coldplay, Blur, David Guetta, Kraftwerk and Kylie Minogue, among others.

“It was a long process, but they seemed like they understood everything we’re going for. We’re passionate about it, and they have a small roster of really amazing artists,” says Jackson. “We wanted to try something bigger with our next album and look forward to having more talented and creative people involved. It’s going to be cool to have a whole team of people to support us.”

According to the group, they held out until they finally found the label that would understand them and let them run with their whimsical ideas.

“One of the reasons why they were so attracted to us is that we are a very self-sufficient band, and we have clear ideas of what we like across everything that we do. That makes it easier for both of us to move forward and help each other,” says the singer. “With more smart, talented people in our corner, we just have a bigger tool box to work with. That’s where we are now, there’s no one telling us, ‘Change this or do that.’ They signed us because they like what we do, and they are here to help us build it.”

Now backed by a major record label, the quartet seems fairly close to breaking into the limelight, but the band seems more preoccupied with what they’re doing here and now.

“I’m not sure what the future holds, all you can do is the best you can. For us, it’s always really exciting because we’re constantly making videos, movies, art of some sort. We’re producing more than we ever have,” exclaims Jackson. “We only have one rule: We’ll try anything. We don’t say no and we approach all different options. There is no one way to do things, there are various equations that steer you in the right direction.”

Saint Motel has been hard at work for years since their inception in 2007, however, it seems that more recently the band’s success has taken a giant leap, playing sold-out tours with Weezer, performing at major festivals and headlining venues like Los Angeles’ legendary El Rey. For the band, there is still a lot of turf to cover.

“I consider us an underground band with a cult following that is slowly growing just based on the merits of our efforts and sensibilities,” says Jackson. “We never had any sort of backing, we were just four friends that love to do this and want to make it our life’s work. We want to do this ‘til the day we die.

“We’ve played some big shows, and we’ve played some really small shows for like four people at the back of a bar, but it really doesn’t matter for us whether we’re playing for one person or a million people. The fundamentals are the same: to make the best, craziest show you can.”

Their upcoming EP, due out July 28, is as of yet untitled, but in typical Saint Motel fashion you can expect major changes and a totally different direction than their last effort, Voyeur.

“It’s going to be a really fun collection of songs, an EP, it has ‘My Type’ [their latest single] on it,” he reveals. “[The Song] is a good reference to what you can expect. It’s higher energy, fun, good times, tongue-in-cheek lyrics, female vocals, poems, huge group vocals choruses, strings. There’s a lot of elements.”

It is no secret that the band is into some unusual stuff. If you have ever been to a Saint Motel’s Zombie Prom, you understand what I mean. People dressed like zombies in the middle of spring in an old vintage venue Downtown dancing so hard their dead fake skin literally melts off. Will they do it again this year?

“I’m not sure,” says Jackson doubtfully. “We have a show coming up on Aug. 2 at the Troubadour. That’s going to be a live streaming, multimedia show with comedy, bands, a special host and a retro television vibe. We want to have crazier, bigger shows and give people a more immersive experience. If that doesn’t happen for a little bit, that’s fine we’ll just keep building it to the point where we finally have the means to offer people all the craziness that’s in our head.”

For more information, visit saintmotel.com.
“I love fusing folk and house music together, and adding a little bit of indie,” says Page. “On this record, there are a lot of guitars, there’s a lot of piano. I think it’s cool to bring in those elements because there’s so much music that is good these days, but it sounds too similar. I want this to be distinct, something that stands out from the pack.”

Another significant difference between Page and the rest of the pack is that he is known for his environmental consciousness.

“I don’t consider myself an environmentalist, but there are really practical solutions that are available, like solar panels. If you live in California with this [weather], you might as well do it,” he tells. “It’s not like we’re saving the whales here, but you might as well use what you have available and not waste things.”

Besides having a green home, Page is the proud driver of a black Tesla Model S.

“I’ve e-mailed other DJs [saying], ‘I’d like to get you involved with Tesla,’ but Deadmau5 has his Ferrari, Calvin Harris has a Rolls Royce Phantom, Wolfgang Gartner’s got his Maserati. I think Kaskade has a muscle car,” he lists. “Everybody’s got their own thing, their own nice car now, but very few have gone the electric route.”

Page seems to be tethered to pragmatism and possesses a tireless work ethic, a consistent approach that seems unchanged since his college days in the Northeast. It is no coincidence that someone with the simple, head-on approach to his craft became an environmentalist, not for political or ideological reasons, but because he objectively sees the longterm benefits of keeping the planet clean.

His big-picture outlook and forward thinking also make him a credible source on where EDM will be in the near and distant future.

“It’s going to keep growing more and more, especially as kids graduate from college, as they don’t want to go to festivals anymore. [The EDM scene will shift] to the clubbing scene, and they’re going to have to build more clubs or cater more to those kids, so you’re going to see a bump there. It’s really interesting to see what will happen. I mean, I would’ve never predicted that this music would be on daytime radio.”

Time and various circumstances will dictate whether Page’s prediction is accurate. But considering the approach he takes with his endeavors, it is difficult not to believe him.

For more information, visit morgan-page.com.

very welcoming, especially the fans.

“The L.A. crowd has been so supportive of me. This show that I just did [at Hollywood Forever May 30] sold out, which I wasn’t expecting. That in itself just goes to show what kind of fans are here,” a grateful Ahn shares. “L.A. can get this rap of a jaded audience, which in certain shows is there, but I feel fortunate that with my shows, the fans that come are so nice, genuine and super supportive. [They’re] very open about their love for the show, which is such a nice feeling and energy. It’s always a good feeling, playing in L.A.”

Ahn, whose songs have appeared on television shows like “Grey’s Anatomy,” “Knight Rider,” “Make It Or Break It,” and films like Disturbia and My Sister’s Keeper, has toured alongside artists such as Willie Nelson, Joshua Radin, Amos Lee and Ray LaMontagne.

“Touring with Willie Nelson and getting to see him perform every night, he is my favorite performer, which a lot of people find surprising because his live shows are so different from his recordings. He’s just such a badass on stage. It’s very inspiring, I learned a lot from watching these guys and it was such an honor to be a part of their tour,” she says.

With the end of her own North American tour in support of This Is Where We Are, Ahn is aiming her sights abroad with projects that aren’t restrained to the creation of music solely for new albums.

“I’m writing a theme song for a Japanese TV drama, so I am back in the studio to finish that. Then I leave to Japan for six weeks to do press for a movie that I wrote another theme song for,” Ahn says. “After that, I am hoping to go back on the road in the U.S. in the fall, and we’ll see what happens after that. I’m sure I’ll start writing again.”

This Is Where We Are is currently available. For more information, visit priscillaahn.com
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Los Angeles is one of the comedy capitals of the country. In addition to all the great comedy clubs, there are bars and restaurants all over the city hosting stand-up comedy shows. Seeing live comedy is a great night out, and there is a tremendous amount of talent in Los Angeles.

One such talent is L.A. comic Brian McDaniel, also known for the Fox celebrity news show “TMZ,” who recently took time to talk with me about his journey into the comedy world. McDaniel has been doing standup for three years now and has been performing regularly at the legendary Ice House in Pasadena.

McDaniel grew up in Maryland, just outside of the DC area, where he used his time on the school bus to develop his comedic skills as a defense mechanism.

“When I was a kid on the bus, every day was complete and total peril for your social status,” McDaniel remembers.

Proving himself daily on the school bus is also where McDaniel learned to differentiate the mechanics of comedy.

“I learned a lot about what’s really funny and what’s funny because people are popular. I always try to remember that when I work on material,” he says. “Obviously, being likable is what makes people want to engage with you but just playing on that is kind of cheap.”

Although talented, McDaniel has a nice guy quality and a self deprecation that makes him likable to most audiences. He attributes this to his willingness to being himself on stage.

“You can feel the crowd draw into you when you do something honestly,” he admits.

McDaniel keeps his relatability going by sharing about his life via jokes. His onstage persona is about his modern marriage. McDaniel’s wife, Angelica, is quite a powerhouse as the Head of CBS Daytime. McDaniel calls himself his ‘wife’s wife’ and explores the dynamic of being married to a strong, successful woman.

Every comic has a different joke-writing process that’s unique to their personality and style of comedy. I ask McDaniel about how he develops his material.

“[I’ll take] one little thing that I’ll find funny, one little idea that I’ll find funny and reverse engineer it, start filling out a premise to make it work,” he describes.

McDaniel is a perfectionist. Wanting to give audiences his best, he is constantly fine tuning his jokes and making sure to keep true to valid premises.

“That’s really tricky because people can tell when a premise is bull. When you have a thing that you thought was funny, something inspired it. So there’s some story around it. Now, maybe you can’t tell the story exactly as it is, but you have to build in funny moments throughout it,” he says. “The biggest pitfall and the biggest thing that I work through is when you create straw men, things to make your joke work that aren’t real. Beats and your setup that are just serving the purpose of the punchline, they can be smelled from a mile away. The punchline is funny, but if you’re doing things to set it up that aren’t realistic or real within the world that you’re creating, your joke is dead in the water.”

McDaniel also credits his seven years spent entertaining millions of people on “TMZ” to his ability to churn out new jokes.

“In terms of material, I’ve been at TMZ for seven years, and every morning I’m trying and failing at telling jokes,” he tells. “I think failing, bombing and material not working is the best way to learn. So I’m doing that every day for literally hours a day.”

Having seen McDaniel bring the house down recently at a club in Hollywood, I can attest to his universal appeal as a comic.

Brian McDaniel headlines the New York Comedy Club June 19 and performs on the TMZ Comedy Tour at the Laugh Factory in West Hollywood June 24 and the Comedy Palace in San Diego Sept. 5 and 6. For more information, visit mrbrianmcd.com.
FESTIVAL SUPREME
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2014 - L.A. SPORTS ARENA & EXPOSITION PARK

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Giraros is a hidden gem in Studio City, boasting a menu dedicated to the farm-to-table philosophy. Executive Chef CJ Jacobson, a former contestant on Bravo’s “Top Chef,” prides himself on sourcing local ingredients to create a diverse menu inspired by California.

Jacobson describes himself as an “herb-forward” chef, and the cuisine reflects this title. The interesting balance of each item pays homage to his experience working with Chef René Redzepi in the Noma kitchen in Copenhagen, with a California flair. From the specialty cocktail menu to the dessert offerings, Giraros shines brightly, much like its namesake, which is the Spanish word for ‘sunflower.’

Studio City is known more for Hollywood studios than for exquisite dining locations. Jacobson has been quoted as stating the Valley did not offer a spot where diners could enjoy an upscale setting, great food but not too serious of an environment. Much like its wisecracking chef, Giraros is a touch intense without being too serious.

Floral accents are present throughout the space, but they provide a more rustic theme than a feminine, flowery one. The variety of stone and wood throughout creates an intimate and contemporary finish.

The specialty cocktail list at Giraros does not veer from the seasonal, local theme. The mixologist allows guests to be adventurous or simply choose a contemporary twist on a classic cocktail.

The Sorrel Pine Gimlet uses fresh lime, pine syrup, St. George Terroir Gin and Giraros’s ever present herb, sorrel. St. George Terroir Gin is a California gin, with strong hints of both juniper and herb. The combination of the sorrel and the herb makes the cocktail perfectly balanced.

The Blackberry Kumquat Daisy is the ideal cocktail for the adventurous sipper. In it, the Slow Hand White Whiskey is un-aged and does not have the typical oak-y flavor of whiskey. When combined with the fresh citrus and berry mix, it yields the perfect light, summer cocktail.

The most predictable libation is the Ginger Grapefruit Fix. The cocktail consists of Plata Tequila, ginger, Del Maguey Vida Mezcal, lime and grapefruit. Though unoriginal, the cocktail is delicious.

Jacobson combines fresh and seasonal local ingredients to create shared dishes that send your taste buds on a flavor roller-coaster ride. The standout dish is the Murray Farms Cherries. The cherries’ extraordinary flavor, combined with a slightly tart yogurt and topped with frozen herbs, creates a summer cornucopia of deliciousness. Jacobson freezes green leafy herbs, doused in lemon, salt and pepper and finishes the dish with them.

Time is of the essence when presented with this selection, but any
Born and Raised in L.A.
Food That Was Dreamt Up in SoCal

Cheeseburger. Cobb Salad. Doritos. Sound like the lunch special at that little diner around the corner from your work? Maybe so, but these three American classics mean much, much more to Angelenos. For centuries, forward-thinking culinary geniuses have migrated to the L.A. area in search of the perfect platform to introduce the next big kitchen creation to the world. Today, this melting potropolis is booming with delicious foods from all over the globe—literally every corner. In Los Angeles, Chinatown and the great American diner coexist, vegan cuisine can be found but mere blocks from world-renowned Korean barbecue and flavor fusion is simply a way of life. What most do not realize is that culinary creativity is nothing new to Los Angeles, but rather, this great city has a rich history of edible art.

Today we probably wouldn’t classify a simple cheeseburger as “art,” but in the 1920s that is exactly what it was. Colorado Street in Pasadena was home to a small restaurant called the Rite Spot, and in this establishment, the cheeseburger was born. Young owner and operator L.C. Sternberger coined his cheese-topped beef patty as the Aristocratic Burger, adding it to the list of menu offerings. It was a simple yet delicious addition—one that caught on in no time at all.

Some foodie frenzies have been created purely by accident. Much like the Brown Derby owner’s lasting sensation: Cobb Salad. In 1937 while most slumbered, Bob Cobb rooted around his restaurant kitchen and diced his way to international notoriety. In reality, Mr. Cobb was simply looking to whip up a meal to satisfy his hungry guest’s midnight craving. What he served was one appetizing bowl. A bed of crisp lettuce topped with everything but the kitchen sink: cheese and chicken breast, grape tomatoes and green onions, avocados and eggs. He even topped this hearty salad with bacon.

What is there not to love? Exactly. Cobb Salad is now known worldwide—from Los Angeles to Florida, from Tokyo to Paris. Brown Derby Restaurant put this salad on the map, an international sensation indeed.

Much like many of our current enticing inventions, the roots of Doritos are dated to centuries past. The original potato chip was created in 1853, but the invention of the Doritos brand has continued to be a game changer ever since.

Cheeseburger. Cobb Salad. Doritos. Today, we wouldn’t call these American classics art, but maybe, just maybe, we should. I’ve put my own twist on the great American cheeseburger, and even added a little something extra. This burger is a little bit of bad and tastes a whole heck of lot of good. Meat, cheese and a little more meat all gets stuffed between the “little golden things” or Doritos, were being produced and packaged for mass consumption. In 1972, the Nacho Cheese flavor was introduced, and the Doritos brand has continued to be a game changer ever since.

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Now, add the shredded cheddar and Swiss cheeses. Again, use your hands to gently mix the cheese into the ground turkey. Preheat your skillet to medium heat and your oven to 400 degrees (so you can toast the onion rolls). Divide the ground turkey mixture into fourths, form them into disks and place them onto a plate. Form a small well in the middle of each disk.

Lightly oil the skillet, and place a patty into the skillet, well side down. Cook for a few minutes on each side, until well done. Set on a cooling rack to drain excess fat. Don’t have a cooling rack? Have no fear, a clean plate, topped with a paper towel or two will do just fine.

Once your burgers are done, fry up your bacon! Drain the same way. Half your onion rolls. Spread honey mustard on each roll. Half. Place on a baking sheet and toast for 3–5 minutes.

Assembly: Bun bottom, tomato, lettuce, patty, bacon, pickles, bun top. Fresh delicious cheeseburger goodness with a twist, they’re so good your whole family will enjoy!  

Ingredients:
1 lb Ground turkey
¼ cup Sharp cheddar cheese (shredded)
¼ cup Swiss cheese (shredded)
6 dashes Worcestershire sauce
tsp Garlic powder
1 tbsp Onion powder
1 tsp Seasoning salt
8 strips Bacon
Pickle chips
1 Roma tomato (sliced)
4 large leaves of Green Leaf Lettuce (washed, patted dry)
¼ cup honey mustard
4 Onion rolls

Instructions: In a large mixing bowl, combine ground turkey, Worcestershire sauce, garlic powder, onion powder and seasoning salt. Today, your hands are going to be your most essential tools. With your hands, work the seasonings into the meat until the flavors combine. Be careful not to overwork the ground turkey, or it may fall apart when you cook it.

Next, add the shredded cheddar and Swiss cheeses. Again, use your hands to gently mix the cheese into the ground turkey. Preheat your skillet to medium heat and your oven to 400 degrees (so you can toast the onion rolls). Divide the ground turkey mixture into fourths, form them into disks and place them onto a plate. Form a small well in the middle of each disk.

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WORLD CUP PREVIEW

By Francisco Reyes

The 2014 World Cup kicks off June 12 in Brazil, and all of the world is watching. The increasing popularity of soccer in the United States has taken the marquee tournament beyond a niche interest. Even outside the states, the number of technological platforms that connect the world and make fans feel like part of the action results in this World Cup being the most anticipated yet. To follow is a breakdown of the dynamics of each group and predictions of teams that will advance to the round of 16 (FIFA rankings in parentheses).

Group A: Brazil (3), Cameroon (56), Croatia (18), Mexico (20)
Having qualified as the host nation for the second time in World Cup history, Brazil drew a relatively manageable group. The Seleção are expected to win the group with relative ease (Anything short of seven points in this stage would be shocking.), but most people are divided on the team that will join them in the round of 16. Mexico and Croatia took the roundabout way to a berth, winning play-off matches against New Zealand and Iceland, respectively (with Mexico qualifying thanks in part to a series of fortuitous plays), but as we’ve learned in past World Cups (Uruguay, 2010), teams shouldn’t always be judged by the road they’ve traveled.

Injuries to Mario Mandžukić (Bayern Munich, GER) and Luis Montes (León, MEX) – both of whom were expected to be key contributors for Croatia and Mexico, respectively – should make the road even easier for Brazil. Mexico has historically been a tough draw for Brazil, but with the team playing at home and with the see-saw form of Mexico leading into the World Cup, a shock win by the Aztecas is highly unlikely.

With the exception of 2006, Cameroon has qualified for every World Cup since 1990, making them the most consistent African side in recent history. But this year’s team will be reduced to a role of spoiler, at best. The only mystery of this group is likely be solved when Mexico and Croatia square off on June 23. The pedigree and historical consistency in the group stage of the Mexicans gives them the advantage.

Prediction: Brazil and Mexico advance

Group B: Australia (62), Chile (14), Netherlands (15), Spain (1)
This is a much more difficult group to predict. This group is the first runner-up for the “Group of Death” title, and if you consider recent history, you could make the argument for this group to be the GoD.

There were no major surprises on the 23-man roster for the Dutch. Robin van Persie (Manchester United, ENG), Arjen Robben (Bayern Munich) and Wesley Sneijder (Galatasaray, TUR) anchor the attack again for Clockwork Oranje, who lost in the World Cup Final to Spain in 2010 and fell to Portugal and Denmark in the group stage of what was a forgettable 2012 Euro Cup.

Spain, on the other hand, won both the 2010 World Cup and the 2008 and 2012 Euro Cups (the latter on a 4-0 thumping of Italy in the final). But no team has won back-to-back World Cups since Pelé’s Brazil squad in 1958 and 1962 (when the trophy was called the Jules Rimet trophy and there were only 16 participants). Also, by virtue of being one of the most successful national sides in the past 20 years, Spain has the biggest target on their back. This means their signature tiki-taka style of play (somewhat akin to West Coast offense in American football and characterized by making short, high percentage passes, while maintaining possession more than their opponent) and their signature way of pressuring their opponents to regain possession (akin to having a great forecheck in hockey) has been analyzed more than any other style of play. If the current form of FC Barcelona – largely credited as the birthplace of tiki-taka – is any indication that managers have found ways to stymie the effects of Spain’s signature style of play (a style that was ironically invented by Dutch legend Johan Cruyff), a repeat of 2010 on South American soil will be a very tall task for Spain.

Chile are very unfortunate to be in this group because their attractive style of play would be a joy to watch in the knockout stages. But even the amazing box-to-box play of Arturo Vidal (Juventus, ITA) the tireless grit of Gary Medel (Cardiff City, WAL, fittingly nicknamed “Pitbull”) and their highly-effective forward/winger Alexis Sanchez (Barcelona, ESP) will fall short in terms of firepower and pedigree against Spain and Netherlands.

Australia will be content to leave Brazil having stolen a point.

Prediction: Netherlands and Spain advance

Group C: Colombia (8), Greece (12), Ivory Coast (23), Japan (46)
This is the third consecutive World Cup for the Ivory Coast since qualifying to their first tournament in 2006, but it is the first time Les Éléphants won’t be in the GoD. This is the group with the most misleading FIFA rankings. With no disrespect to the eighth-ranked Colombians and 12th-ranked Greeks, their high rankings are a prime example of the flawed FIFA ranking system, because the Africans and the South Americans will battle for group supremacy.

On the opposite end, Japan’s ranking is far too low for a team with Shinji Kagawa (Manchester United), Yuto Nagatomo (Inter Milan, ITA) and Keisuke Honda (AC Milan, ITA). Nevertheless, Japan faces an uphill battle and will likely bow out in the group stage with the Greeks. But, don’t discard the Japanese throwing a wrench in the plans of the...
Ivory Coast or Colombia before heading back to Tokyo. This is one of the groups that will be interesting from beginning to end.

Colombia is intriguing. Even under the flawed FIFA ranking system, being the eighth-ranked team in the world is nothing to sneeze at. This is the first World Cup for the Cafeteros since 1998, and they’ve only made it out of the group stage once (1990), so history is not on Colombia’s side. A knee injury keeps top-choice striker Radamel Falcao (Monaco, FRA) out of the tournament. Jackson Martínez (Porto, POR), Carlos Bacca (Sevilla, SPA) and Teófilo Gutiérrez (River Plate, ARG) will be asked to fill in for Falcao on the attack.

The overall quality and strength of the Ivory Coast and Colombia rosters is enough to see them through the group and into the round of 16.

**Prediction: Ivory Coast and Colombia advance**

**Group D:** Costa Rica (28), England (10), Italy (9), Uruguay (7)
When the United States landed in Group G with Germany, Portugal and Ghana, the American media immediately labeled that group the infamous GoD. But when matching up Italy’s, Uruguay’s and England’s combined seven World Cup titles (more than one-third of the nineteen World Cups that have been played) with Ghana’s, Germany’s, Portugal’s and the United States’ World Cup résumé, it isn’t even close. Even in recent World Cups, the teams in Group D have had more success than their Group G counterparts.

Most people are penciling in Uruguay and Italy to advance due to the round of sixteen due to the recent success and virtual home-field advantage of the Charruas, along with Italy’s pedigree and second-place finish in last summer’s Confederations Cup. The exclusion of the English from the knockout stage isn’t shocking, considering Wayne Rooney, (Manchester United), Steven Gerrard (Liverpool, ENG) and John Terry (Chelsea, ENG) form part of a generation that has reached the pinnacle of club soccer, but has found several ways to underachieve at the international level. This will likely be the last hurrah for many players of that generation, but players from the upcoming generation such as Ross Barkley (Everton, ENG), Raheem Sterling (Liverpool) and Daniel Sturridge (Liverpool) are among several youngsters coming off gat seasons for their respective clubs. This means that although a long run for the English may seem like a mini miracle to some, the English have the right blend of firepower and experience to oust either of the two favored sides.

Also, there has been at least one shocking group stage exit in nearly every recent World Cup (Colombia, 1994; Spain, 1998; France, Portugal, and Argentina, 2002; France and Italy, 2010), which means a first or second place finish by England in this group shouldn’t shock anyone.

Like Australia, Costa Rica would be fortunate to go home with a point.

**Prediction: Uruguay and England advance**

**Group E:** Ecuador (28), France (16), Honduras (30), Switzerland (8)
France had arguably the most disappointing World Cup in their history in 2010 and were dealt an unexpected blow just days before this World Cup when Franck Ribéry (Bayern Munich) was ruled out of the tournament. There are many players from that 2010 squad headed to Brazil, and it’s difficult to believe a team of France’s stature will repeat the same mistakes twice.

Ecuador has the de-facto home-field advantage and are an enticing nominee for dark horse, although they’ve looked out of sync in the friendlies leading up to Brazil.

Switzerland allowed just six goals in 10 World Cup qualifiers in Europe, so if there’s one overlooked team in this World Cup, it’s hard to argue in favor of another squad.

This is the one group where it would not be surprising to see any of the four teams finish first, second, third or fourth (perhaps with the exception of Honduras finishing first).

The Honduras lineup is one that should not be overlooked, though. Emilio Izaguirre (Celtic, SCO), Roger Espinoza (Wigan, ENG) and Wilson Palacios (Stoke City, ENG) are among many Catrachos that provide extensive experience in Europe, something previous Honduras teams have lacked.

Although the two European teams are traveling the furthest and are more out of their element in terms of the weather and other conditions, both sides have the potential to make it to the knockout stage – and then some.

**Predictions: Switzerland and France to advance**

**Group F:** Argentina (5), Bosnia and Herzegovina (21), Iran (43), Nigeria (44)
Any group with Argentina is automatically interesting. Their demanding fans and national media leave no stone unturned when deciphering every aspect of the Albicelestes. Adding Lionel Messi (Barcelona) to the mix (A player who is arguably one World Cup trophy away from becoming a deity and eclipsing Diego Armando Maradona as the greatest soccer player in the history of Argentina.) only makes Argentina’s run even more enticing. The fact that this World Cup is on South American soil raises the stakes for Messi and company. Because they face Iran (a leading candidate for worst team of the tournament), Bosnia and Herzegovina (playing in their first-ever World Cup) and Nigeria (who are winless in three WC matches against Argentina) the Albicelestes should head into the knockout stage in pole position.

Despite the aforementioned struggles of Nigeria against Argentina’s run even more enticing. The fact that this World Cup is on South American soil raises the stakes for Messi and company. Because they face Iran (a leading candidate for worst team of the tournament), Bosnia and Herzegovina (playing in their first-ever World Cup) and Nigeria (who are winless in three WC matches against Argentina) the Albicelestes should head into the knockout stage in pole position.

Despite the aforementioned struggles of Nigeria against Argentina, the Super Eagles are a side that’s difficult to score against but don’t lack the firepower to cause damage up top.

Goalkeeper Vincent Enyeama (Lille, FRA), midfielder John Mikel Obi (Manchester City, ENG) and forward Peter Odemwingie (Stoke City) are going to prove to be enough the see the Nigerians make another trip into the knockout stage.

But expect Edin Džeko (Manchester City, ENG) and Asmir Begovic (Stoke City) to anchor a Bosnian team that is a threat to any team they face.

**Prediction: Argentina and Nigeria to advance**

**Group G:** Germany (2), Ghana (37), Portugal (4), United States (13)
United States coach Jurgen Klinsmann made headlines when he said the Americans will not win the World Cup in Brazil.

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The days of the classic argyle-and-plaid golf outfits have faded into the past. These days, when we look onto the golf course we see a plethora of casual outfits that better suit the athleticism that is required from the sport. There is, however, an aspect of the game that one simply cannot get rid of: the sun. The wide open greenery of a golf course can make the relentless rays of SoCal beams a burden on all who play. With the hottest days of the year approaching, it may be wise to look into some new golf threads that will take some of the edge off that dreaded heat. That’s where Chase 54 comes in.

What happens when you combine a love of golf and textile technology? A line of golf clothing with high-performance fabrics that allow the wearer to take a swing without being restricted by their clothing or sweat. With fabrics that have a UPF rating from 30+ to 50+, golfers are able to forget about reapplying sunscreen – at least for a little while.

Chase54 is not out to redefine how people dress for the game of golf, but to refine the garments themselves. The small added details make a world of difference. There are metal tips in the collar so that it stays in perfect shape. Their military hem makes pants look polished and stylish. Not to mention, all men’s shorts and pants contain a pocketed that will keep all of its contents dry, which is especially nice when you don’t want to ruin your scorecard with your own sweat.

The game of golf was first played in 15th-century Scotland. Allow yourself to embrace all that has changed in the game since, including the outfits. Let yourself look undeniably hip, while keeping cool on the course. Golfers in the Middle Ages only wish they had it this good.

For more information, visit chase54.com.

The most difficult beauty feature to groom on most faces is the eyebrows. Celebrity brow expert Anastasia Soare has helped Oprah Winfrey, Kim Kardashian, Madonna, Jennifer Lopez, Penelope Cruz, Sharon Stone and more frame their faces with the perfect brow. Referred to as the "Beauty Innovator and Definitive Brow Expert," Soare has achieved iconic status in the beauty world. She has been featured in beauty-based publications such as Allure and also major fashion magazines like Vogue, Elle and InStyle. This beauty powerhouse has built her business from the ground up in the most famous zip code in the world, 90210. Her brand, appropriately named Anastasia Beverly Hills, has reached global recognition with products for brows and is also expanding to PRO products for makeup artists and beauty enthusiasts everywhere.

Growing up in Constanta, Romania, she was always intrigued by classical Greek, Byzantine and Roman styles.
FATHER’S DAY GIFT GUIDE

By Michael Carranza

Father’s Day is approaching, and we have you covered if you are having trouble finding something special to give your dad. It’s tough being a dad, and all active fathers deserve appreciation. Here is a list of some of the coolest things that will get your dad’s attention, even if he’s busy watching the World Cup on June 15.

The Tie Bar (thetiebar.com) – Does your dad have a great sense of style? Do you maybe steal some of his sartorial secrets in order to be more put together when you’re out in public? Then why not get the man a gift set from the Tie Bar, which sells those little things that make all the difference. They specialize in accessories for the modern, stylish man. It is a great place to buy your dad some ties or dapper socks. They also have gift sets; my personal favorite is the tie bar set that goes for $45 dollars and comes with a bronze, silver and platinum tie bar. If your dad is meticulous about his clothes, then he will surely appreciate the little details that put the finishing touch on a stylish outfit.

Yamazaki 12-Year Whisky – Everyone deserves a good drink to wind down with after long, stressful days of work. Your father has worked his whole life, and I’m sure the Jack Daniels is getting a little routine. If your dad is a whisky aficionado, then you can splurge on Japanese whisky, which is quickly becoming the whisky of choice at bars across the United States. Get your dad ahead of the curve or continue his tradition of quality choices of drinks by getting him a bottle of Yamazaki. This medium-bodied, woody whisky is sure to liven up Father’s Day around the house. Yamazaki is meant to be savored and should be saved for special celebrations because one bottle runs $70 to $89.

Trunk Club (trunkclub.com) – Let’s face it, your dad might not be perfect. If he’s lacking in style and reading GQ Magazine is not enough, then maybe he needs a little more help. This is where Trunk Club comes into play. A personal stylist hand-selects clothing that fits your father’s style and body type. Then, Trunk Club sends your father a trunk of clothing to try on and he chooses what he wants to keep or send back. You only pay for the clothing he keeps, and shipping is free both ways. It’s perfect for a busy man on the go who doesn’t have the time to go shopping.

Guelaguetza – How about getting dad out of the house to enjoy some beer, quality Mexican food and the World Cup? The Oaxaca-style restaurant is sure to please anyone. It has been described as a home away from home due to its familiar, living room-style setting. Mexico is not scheduled to play on Father’s Day, but three good games are slated and will definitely be shown at Guelaguetza.

Dollar Shave Club (dollarsaveclub.com) – The most convenient and practical service on the list has got to be Dollar Shave Club. It’s such a simple solution to every man’s annoyance: buying razors. Razors are overpriced and branded to do stuff that is really quite over the top. Keep it simple for dad, and sign him up for the monthly service that delivers necessary razors right to his door to spare him an inconvenient run to the supermarket.

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Anastasia Beverly Hills’ products is the high quality at an affordable price. You can find her products on her website or purchase them at retailers such as Sephora, Ulta and Nordstrom. Anastasia Beverly Hills Salon is located at 438 N. Bedford Drive. For more information, visit anastasia.net.
The Last Bookstore: L.A. Hidden Gems 101

The moment steps are taken into the Last Bookstore, life unfolds like in the movies. No, really – it’s breathtaking. You’re Belle the moment she walks into Beast’s library. There are waves of books cascading around the walls surrounding the aisles of stacks that greet you with the scent of pages just waiting to be engulfed.

On the first floor, you see the various genre departments. New and used fiction, literature, non-fiction, art, poetry and comics line the shelves of the bookstore’s third incarnation. In 2005, it first opened its doors as a small buy-and-sell loft space before eventually moving to the Old Bank District off 5th and Spring. Within the first floor there is a vinyl section, comics and, in the center, there is a stage for readings and performances. On any given day, you can walk in and spectate a magic show or open mic.

If you’re a book lover, chances are you may have seen the Book Tunnel in the Labyrinth on the Mezzanine level of the Last Bookstore on sites like Tumblr or Pinterest. It’s the lovely art installation that is bordering on book porn, which you can walk through and have a moment of wonder in or, share a moment of wonder in. In order to get to the Labyrinth and the tunnel once you’re at the bookstore, you have to walk up a series of creaky wooden stairs that lead you to a fantastic adventure. You’re met with an empty chair that invites you to take a box or cart from it above you in a flurry of words. There is an invitation to take a box or cart with you, as you’re warned that every book on that level is a dollar. You may think you are just going to grab a movie or two, but in time you’ll find the need go back and grab treasure you missed the first time. For example, on the right just past the doorway in, there is an open vault that is a nook of sci-fi curios filled with novels and pulp centering around the genre. Old knobs and radio parts echo with the buzz of the place. It’s especially eerie if you’re by yourself. You tinker, and it tinkers with you. It’s a place where you feel like an adventure awaits in every corner and where you wish characters would spring to life from its pages to pull you along. Losing track of time is incredibly easy here and must be prepared for. Don’t go too crazy downstairs because the second floor will take a toll on your wallet. From old books to VHS and vinyls, the various rooms seduce you to run your fingers along the spines to pluck out a selection to take home with you.

Once you find your way through the kaleidoscope of books, there is even a selection of art galleries and small vintage oddity shops. There is so much to find! A video cassette copy of RoboCop that you haven’t had since you were a kid reminds you of the first time you saw the film. The satisfaction of finding a copy of Dune in the printing you’re collecting Herbert’s series in. “Much Ado About Nothing” in a pocket size to carry with you and rehearse with. Thingamabobs like old board games, typewriters and high-tea hats to invoke that spirit of nostalgia. In a world where things are going digital, here is a place to hold tangible creations that will say a lot about you. That’s the magic in the Last Bookstore: The things you find once you go in compose you. It’s the hidden gem of Los Angeles where the treasure you walk out with reveals you.

The Last Bookstore is located at 453 S. Spring St., Ground Floor, Downtown. For more information, visit lastbookstorela.com.

By Sabina Ibarra

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diner is likely to devour this appetizer quickly.

Another notable offering is the Nectarines Roasted in Forest Floor. Jacobson rotates the fruit seasonally but the burrata, crispy lentils and basil stay put all year round. The smooth burrata, mixed with the crunch of the lentils, yields a wonderful texture.

The entrée choices range from a Grilled NY Prime Steak to Tamai Farms Pan Roasted Cauliflower and a Whole Fried Red Snapper.

The Pork Loin Roasted in Hay has a distinct flavoring of the hay. The potato puree and sweet clover consume compliment a slightly overcooked loin.

The Braised Lamb Shank is the standout item. The dish is served with parsnip puree, loquat, dill, crispy brussels and a juniper reduction. The shank is prepared wonderfully, with the lamb being perfectly tender and delicate. The crispy brussels are a wonderful compliment to the texture of the meat.

Jacobson creates a limited yet diverse dessert menu. The best offering is the Chocolate Chiboust. The combination of salted caramel gelato, chocolate pudding and sable cookie is perfection for the palate. The Fresh Strawberries is a close second, with buttermilk donuts that are perfectly puffy.

If you find yourself craving a carefully selected seasonal menu with little fuss, pop in to Girasol. This blooming flower is definitely worth the trip. Many times, ousted contestants from “Top Chef” do not live up to the hype, but CJ Jacobson and Girasol do.

Girasol is located at 11334 Moorpark St., Studio City. For reservations and more information, visit girasolrestaurant.com.
Klinsmann may sound pessimistic, but having managed a heavily-favored German team that crashed out of the 2006 World Cup in the semifinals on home soil and having won the whole thing as a player in 1990, he knows the difficulty of the road ahead. Thus, he is focusing more on overhauling the American way of playing soccer (which he says stresses more on heart and hustle than on technical ability). Although he has mentioned his intentions to change American soccer several times, which is something that his puzzling 23-man roster selection reflects, Klinsmann’s exclusion of Landon Donovan (LA Galaxy, USA) could come back to haunt him if the United States return from Brazil pointless. Many still believe the grit and experience of the United States’ all-time scoring leader would provide a needed boost for the Americans.

If there is a team you could set your watch to in World Cup group play, it’s Germany. They’ve only failed to make it past the group stage once (in 1938) and have been one of the most successful national teams ever since. With a pedigree like that and with no shortage of World Class players (even with the absence of Marco Reus), anything but a first-place finish would be surprising for the *Mannschaft*.

Portugal is a team that has approached the friendlies leading up to the World Cup with extreme caution. Cristiano Ronaldo (Real Madrid, SPA), teammate Pepe and Bruno Alves (Fenerbahce, TUR) anchor a Portugal squad that is flush with talent. Anything short of a quarterfinal berth for Portugal will be considered a failure.

**Prediction: Germany and Portugal to advance**

**Group H:** Algeria (22), Belgium (11), Russia (19), Korea Republic (57)

With the success of players such as Vincent Kompany (Manchester City), Eden Hazard (Chelsea) and Romelu Lukaku (Everton) at the club level, Belgium has been picked as a dark horse perhaps more than any other team. But once enough people pick one particular team as a dark horse, the bloom comes off the rose and it is no longer a sleeper team.

Russia left two once-promising stars who failed to make the leap to superstardom off their 23-man roster: Roman Pavlyuchenko (Lokomotiv Moscow, RUS) and Andrey Arshavin (Zenit Saint Petersburg, RUS). But Igor Denisov (Dynamo Moscow) and their young, but experienced, “number 10” Alan Dzagoev (CSKA Moscow) are primed to lead the Fabio Capello-helmed Russians into the knockout stages despite the absence of household superstars such as Hazard, Kompany and the like.

Russia is inexperienced, captain Roman Shirokov was recently ruled out of the World Cup and Capello was underwhelming as manager of England from 2008 to 2012. However, the fact that they’re in one of the easiest groups, coupled with Capello not being under nearly the same type of scrutiny as he was while managing England, should see the Russians through the round of 16 for the first time in their history. Expect the winner of the June 22 match between Russia and Belgium to win the group.

**Prediction: Russia and Belgium to advance**
What is your favorite summer blockbuster of all time?

The Dark Knight. I am a fan of Stanley Kubrick’s A Clockwork Orange, and Heath Ledger was inspired by Malcolm McDowell’s Alex, which makes sense as to why the Joker was so demented. — Michael C.

The Dark Knight Rises. Especially since the anticipation of that movie being that last one in the franchise was so big. Plus, who doesn’t love Batman? — Gabriel P.

The Christopher Nolan Dark Knight trilogy. I have been a lifelong Batman fan, and prior to Nolan’s films, my hopes for a dark, gritty, true-to-form Batman movie died once Batman & Robin came out. The Dark Knight was one of the most intense, well-written Batman movies I have seen. — Evan S.

The Fifth Element. We ditched school and took the bus to Glendale to see this one. This comic, pulp, sci-fi film is in my top 10 favorite movies. It’s the movie that started my obsession with Milla Jovovich. And, did I mention the amazing costumes by Jean-Paul Gaultier? — Oliver N.

E.T. taught me about adventure and that true friendship knows no boundaries. It’s a movie I still love as an adult and hope to show my kids one day. — Ariel K.

Jaws...Da dum.. Da dum... — Patrick M.

I watched The Matrix every day after middle school for two months straight. To this day, the scene where Neo stops the bullets in midair gives me chills. Then he flies away to Rage Against the Machine – what more could you ask for? It’s probably the best sci-fi movie ever made. — Mark M.

Star Wars, of course! Who doesn’t love a young Harrison Ford in the future with a super hairy BFF? — Jaclyn K.

The Lion King because, although this may sound strange, it scarred me mentally and changed my childhood. I’m still traumatized by Mufasa’s death. — Pablo L.

X-Men. I love anything with superpowers. It took beloved classic comic characters and did them justice. — Brenda C.

This Is The End. Eighty-percent of the dialogue is improv, how brilliant! It has everything I could ask for in a summer blockbuster: action, comedy and a killer cast. — Jocelyn J.

Independence Day was Will Smith’s breakout film role, had advanced special effects for its time, a perennial humans vs. aliens story but on an enormous scale and hundreds of millions of people died, but it was still funny and entertaining. — Edison M.

I have to go with Independence Day. Will Smith was awesome in it. — Lupita W.

Toy Story 3. Drinking a soda, eating popcorn and bringing back childhood memories – now, that is something that can’t be beat. — Andrew C.

I watched the fourth installment of the Transformer series. It may be the same storyline movie after movie, but I love the visual effects. This series has been so aesthetically pleasing, it gives new life to “The Transformers” I used to watch as a kid. — Dillon C.

Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl was a movie I had waited for since I first went on the ride at Disneyland. Plus, anything that features Johnny Depp has my full attention. — Elisa H.

I had a difficult time picking between E.T. and The Hangover, but I went with The Hangover because there is no better crew than the Wolfpack. It’s difficult to watch that movie and not plan a trip to Vegas immediately after. — Francisco R.

Face/Off. At the time, it was such an original idea and great cast. Action packed and twisted from beginning to end! — Ariel P.

Die Hard. It was released in 1988 in the midst of a very hot summer. I fondly remember sneaking into the theater to see it and being blown away. — Paul Z.

The Goonies fulfills my geeky and adventurous side. It’s an amazing film filled with love, suspense and, above all, friendship. A true classic that is just as great as Indiana Jones, with way more comedy. — Daizy N.

Sex and the City 2 is fabulous, full of fashion and amazing interior decor. I was entertained by the inappropriate one-liners and thrown for a bit of a loop with the plot, but the hopeless romantic in me was more than satisfied by the ending. — Nichole J.

The campy fun, thrilling action and amazing story of Sam Raimi’s Spider-Man 2 makes it have a special place in my heart. Seeing Tobey Maguire come back as Spidey to fight Doc Ock while juggling his life as misfit Peter Parker taught me so much. It also showed me that it’s OK to be a dork. — Sabina I.

Alfred Hitchcock is my favorite filmmaker, and Psycho is the ultimate suspense movie. The film’s music makes it even more terrifying. — Ramon A.

Anticipating a movie called The Signal to be amazing! It’s got aliens, suspense, action and a killer soundtrack. — Aiden S.

Finding Nemo is the most aesthetically pleasing of all the Disney/Pixar movies. The colors and animation are enthralling, and the storyline is relatable, charming and emotional. — Krystyn B.

Bad Boys II, Michael Bay’s magnum opus succeeds as a whiz-bang action thriller, an over-the-top urban comedy and even a straight-faced cop drama. It doesn’t hurt that the film contains arguably the greatest car chase ever put to film. — Dash F.
LEGENDS

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