

Wrong sign of history

O.C. ART EXHIBIT DISPLAYS SIGNS FOR EVERY FAILED U.S. PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

BY VERA CASTANEDA

There are two campaign-like signs. One is in black-and-white and reads "Biden" and the other is in blue with "Trump" on it.

Both signs are located at the home of John Spiak, the Grand Central Art Center's director, and will remain there until the Nov. 3 presidential election results are official. Only the losing candidate's sign will make its way onto a residential lawn in Orange County and become the latest addition to Nina Katchadourian's ongoing "Monument to the Unelected" art installation.

Katchadourian's installation consists of 58 election signs bearing the names of losing candidates of every U.S. presidential election, from John Adams to Hillary Clinton. Tuesday marked the first day the installation went on display and it will run until Nov. 17. The artwork will also be on view in three other locations: New York, San Francisco and Scottsdale, Ariz. A fifth location in Madison, Wis., might be added this month.

Over Zoom, Katchadourian described the installation as a Rorschach inkblot and a history quiz.

"This piece is sort of a statement of fact about the past. You could feel happy or sad about any one of these signs and it depends on your own political perspective," Katchadourian said. "There's something kind of paradoxical about the fact that it's



Raul Roa | Staff Photographer

THE INSTALLATION OF Nina Katchadourian consists of 58 signs bearing the names of losing candidates of every presidential election, from John Adams to Hillary Clinton.

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Irvine residents express concern about fumes

People in the northern part of the city claim an asphalt factory is spewing toxic emissions into the air.

BY BEN BRAZIL

Residents of North Irvine say they believe a nearby asphalt factory is releasing toxic fumes, potentially harming their health.

Hundreds have signed an online petition. Others have contacted the city and regional air regulators in an effort to force All American Asphalt to cease production and relocate.

"We moved to Irvine so our children could grow up in a great community with award-winning schools, parks and trails, not knowing that the air here is full of toxic pollutants, which causes us to have bad allergies, sneezing and coughing," resident Peter Lin said in a comment recently submitted to the City Council.

Though the specifics about American Asphalt's emissions have not been made public for scientific analysis, Bruce Blumberg, UC Irvine professor of developmental and cell biology, said asphalt factories can indeed release toxins.

"Asphalt is from crude oil, so basically any of the kinds of hydrocarbons and things that are in crude oil, are in that," he said.

All American Asphalt did not respond to a request for comment.

The petition drive launched a year ago, but has been gaining traction as a local organization, Non-Toxic

Neighborhoods, known in Irvine for a previous drive to ban pesticides, began publicizing it.

"There's just nothing beneficial for your health in crude oil," said Blumberg, an advisor to Non-Toxic Neighborhoods. "There's probably hundreds of chemicals with different levels of toxicity both acute and long-term."

North Irvine residents consider the matter urgent. Some properties offer this lawn-sign argument: "The City of Irvine Must Close This Toxic Factory."

"People are already moving out, and if we can't get them to move the factory or shut it down, then we're all moving," said Kim Konte, founder of Non-Toxic Neighborhoods. "There's no way this amount of exposure is safe for our kids."

The city posted an online update Wednesday after several residents offered sharp criticism at Tuesday's City Council meeting.

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SIX ARTISTS DISPLAY WORK ONLINE FOR ORANGE COAST COLLEGE'S 'ALMOST PRESIDENTIAL' EXHIBIT

BY VERA CASTANEDA

Although arts director Tyler Stallings didn't have gallery access to put together an in-person show, he didn't want to let the "Almost Presidential" exhibit go. It's an election year after all.

Instead he worked with curators and artists to reconfigure the exhibit as an online project through Orange Coast College's Frank M. Doyle Arts Pavilion.

"Almost Presidential" features the work of six artists: Pio Abad, Deborah Aschheim, Matthew Brannon, Cintia Segovia and exhibition curators Marisa J. Futernick and Rebecca Sittler. Their new work focuses on presidents, failed presidential candidates or those who played supporting roles to presidencies. The scope of the online project isn't limited to the U.S., but also ex-



Courtesy of Rebecca Sittler

"SUPPORTERS," 2019, by Rebecca Sittler, from "Fritz: Fragments from an Imagined Presidential" Museum for Walter F. Mondale.

tends to Mexico and the Philippines.

The artwork lives online on the Orange Coast College web-

leased at the end of October and a recorded Zoom panel discussion that will be posted online for public viewing.

"It's a way to extend the experience and part of it is to have a legacy beyond the exhibition," Stallings said.

Coast Community College District announced schools, including OCC, will continue distance learning through the spring semester. Since the Doyle will remain closed in Costa Mesa, Stallings is planning on organizing online programming for the on-campus arts gallery throughout the year.

In the Oct. 1 Zoom panel, Futernick introduced the project and said the past elections may seem quaint in their sense of civility in comparison to the current election but "these histories both contained small

See **Exhibit**, page R6

'The Craft: Legacy' stars Fullerton trans actress Zoey Luna

BY GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

A casting call from Blumhouse Productions sought a young trans actress last year for its reworking of "The Craft," a 90s cult classic following a coven of teen witches.

Zoey Luna unknowingly dressed for the part on an otherwise uneventful day at home.

She slipped a lilac corduroy overall dress on top of a red and blue striped button-up before lacing up a pair of purple Doc Martin boots. Luna completed her outfit by putting on a leather jacket and applying shiny, metallic lipstick when a fleeting but foretelling thought came to mind.

"Oh my God, I look like a teen witch," Luna said to herself. "I could totally be in 'The Craft.'"

Two weeks later, a casting agent agreed, sending her an invitation to audition for the part of Lourdes, loosely conceptualized as a trans Latina witch booted from her home by a disapproving Catholic mother.

A self-taught actress, Luna didn't have an agent at the time.

As an outspoken trans rights activist, she did have a longstanding working relationship with GLAAD, an LGBTQ media advocacy group that offered input on the role.

And Luna, 19, was no stranger to red carpets.

Dante Alencastre's documentary "Raising Zoey" chronicled her transition as a young girl in Downey and premiered at Outfest in 2016. She followed up that project by appearing in the first episode of HBO's four-part docu-series "15: A Quinceañera Story."

By then, Luna already had aspirations of becoming an actress.

"I came out of the womb knowing a few things," she said. "I knew I was a girl, and the other was that I was destined to be in front of the camera for the rest of my life."

True to her passion, Luna landed a role in Rosario Dawson's short film "Boundless" and an appearance on the season finale of the FX series "Pose." But the Fullerton-based actress's biggest break awaited with Lourdes.

After her second audition, Luna

watched "The Craft" from beginning to end, something she hadn't done. The original film debuted in 1996, five years before Luna was born. Starring Robin Tunney and Fairuza Balk as coven sisters later pitted against each other in a duel of good versus evil, it endures as a cult classic.

"Something hit me," Luna recalled, after the viewing. "This is going to be monumental."

In September 2019, "The Craft: Legacy" announced its cast, with Cailee Spaeny (Lily), Gideon Adlon (Frankie) and Lovie Simone (Tabby) joining Luna (Lourdes) in rounding out the new quartet of teen witches.

Luna signed with Transgender Talent, an O.C.-based management company co-founded by Ann Thomas and Kendra Neuberger, in order to formally accept the role. Her major film debut is poised to be a celebratory moment for the trans community.

In its latest annual report, GLAAD found that none of the eight major studios released a film in 2019 with any transgender



Getty Images

ZOEY LUNA, who lives in Fullerton, is starring in a reboot of "The Craft."

characters, much less Latinx ones. This year will be different thanks to "The Craft: Legacy" alone when it arrives Oct. 28 to video on demand.

"The Craft needed a type of queer energy," Luna said. "I'm really grateful for all the other trans kids that are going to get to see this film."

Being the daughter of Mexican immigrants, Luna hopes young Latinas, trans or not, see themselves represented. She definitely sees her reflection in Lourdes, from feeling like an outsider in high school to being estranged from her own mother during

See **Zoey Luna**, page R6



Courtesy of OC Film Fiesta

A STILL FROM "Radical Cram School," directed by Jenessa Joffe and starring Kristina Wong.

OC Film Fiesta goes virtual and spotlights democracy

BY VERA CASTANEDA

The category is democracy — a common theme through the art and theater worlds in October as Election Day approaches.

It also has been a present year-round theme in the work of Victor Payan and Sandra "Pocha" Peña, artists and co-founders of Media Arts Santa Ana (MASA).

And it continues through their 11th edition of OC Film Fiesta with a selection of more than 50 films.

"This election is probably the most critical election we've had in a generation. We want to have discussions around important issues and the filmmakers who are addressing these issues," Payan said.

"We need to inspire people to get out and vote because a lot of people are jaded or cynical. You've got a lot of young people that don't vote by and large, a lot of Latinos who don't vote. These are numbers that can significantly change the outcome."

Peña added that this year's election isn't just important on a national level, but also on a local level. Santa Ana will elect a new mayor and three council members.

Short films in this democracy spotlight include comedian Kristina Wong's web series "Radical Cram School." Imagine a

brightly-colored children's show with a host teaching young Asian- and Pacific Islander-American girls about social justice, revolution and how to be powerful in their bodies.

Wong leads the town-hall style class, usually wearing a head-to-toe yellow outfit with a beret and multi-colored sash.

In one episode focused on civics, the girls take turns on a podium wrapped in an American flag and give campaign speeches with a background of posters featuring author Grace Lee Boggs, activist Yuri Kochiyama, artist Yoko Ono and Resistance Auntie (a woman whose photo of her flipping the bird during President Trump's inauguration became popular on social media).

The girls are dressed in white blazers, honoring women who fought for the right to vote.

Wong is also offering a free virtual workshop on Oct. 25 through MASA's Millennial Producers Academy. A selection of virtual workshops and Q&A sessions with filmmakers is scheduled through October.

Payan and Peña curate the film lineup with the goal to connect to a cultural dialogue, whether it's gentrification, homelessness, health, affordable housing or LGBTQ issues.

Two years ago, they opened up the festival for submissions lead-

IF YOU GO

What: 11th annual OC Film Fiesta
Where: Virtual
When: Oct. 15 to 25
Cost: \$10 for individual screening; \$5 for student, teachers, Santa Ana residents, military and veterans; \$75 for festival pass including access to all films, workshops and Q&A
Information: masamedia.org/ocfilmfiesta2020

ing to a mix of local O.C. filmmakers and international films.

Films with O.C. ties include short documentary "Status Pending," following the lives of five first-generation immigration lawyers, and "Hometown Proud," in which O.C. filmmakers document the life of Archer Altstaetter who returns to his small hometown in Ohio after living openly gay in California for 30 years.

The festival's international lineup highlights "La Llorona" directed by Jayro Bustamante and set in contemporary Guatemala. The film plays with the Mexican and Central American folklore of La Llorona and military violence during a decades long civil war.

Rodrigo Bellot's "Tu Me Man-

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A PHOTO of the All American Asphalt factory in Irvine.

Courtesy of Kim Konte

FUMES

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"We want you to know that we understand the concern of residents in the area and that the City is taking all actions within its power to eliminate the problem," the update states.

Irvine went on to blame the South Coast Air Quality Management District.

"Over the last year, the City has worked hard to get AQMD to bring enforcement actions at the plant that would eliminate the odors but, to date, the agency's actions have fallen short," the post states. City Hall sued the asphalt plant in late July, claiming it's in violation of air quality regulations and local public nuisance provisions.

The lawsuit contends that the plant discharges air contaminants stemming from asphalt, oil, tar-like substances, rubber and smoke. A hearing is set for Jan. 25.

"My City Council colleagues and I are aware of, and understand the concerns of our residents in the North Irvine area," Mayor Christina Shea said in a statement.

"The city has been taking aggressive actions within its power to eliminate the problem and most recently, the city filed a lawsuit in July 2020 and are actively pursuing a resolution to this public nuisance."

The AQMD countered in an email that it is conducting an ongoing investigation into the factory and has served six notices of violation since September 2019.

"South Coast AQMD's investigation seeks to address numerous complaints lodged by local residents, who have identified asphalt and burnt rubber-type odors from the facility," according to the email.

"Although All American Asphalt has been a source of public complaints in the past, there was a noticeable uptick in complaints beginning in September

2019.

The AQMD has received over 700 complaints alleging All American is the source of odors, according to the email, which adds, "Our inspectors have attempted to respond to each complaint."

The agency said plant management has attempted to rectify the issues by repairing equipment, increasing the use of odorant, rerouting trucks from residential areas, modifying production schedules and applying for a permit to install new odor control equipment.

Resident Lesley Tan said in an email that the city has acted "too slowly."

"All the while, the city and the inspectors at AQMD had told me and us that the factory had expanded its operation and was not in compliance," Tan said. "I totally do not understand if that's the case, why aren't they taking strict enforcement to stop it."

One issue brought up by residents is that city maps didn't include the factory location.

"Before approving these tracts, maybe ask yourself if you would pay this price to live next to a heavy industrial factory," Tan said to the council.

"Having to file complaints regularly that did almost nothing, keeping the windows shut the entire time, worrying about the health of your kids and family members, and not being able to enjoy the surroundings of your home is just plain stressful."

Councilwoman Farrah Khan asked City Atty. Jeffrey Melching whether the maps could be updated on the city's website to include All American Asphalt.

The permit for All American Asphalt was granted in 1994 on land that wasn't annexed by the city until 2001.

A map identifying the factory location was added to the city website on Wednesday.

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Inequities of pandemic learning are on stark display at Orange County-Long Beach border

BY STEPHANIE LAI

To understand the inequities of student education in this fall of the pandemic, few places offer a starker lesson than the Orange County border that divides working-class Long Beach and the upscale suburb of Los Alamitos.

On a recent weekday, Mitchell Cruz, a junior at Los Alamitos High School, woke to the sound of his 7 a.m. alarm and picked out a school-approved outfit instead of the simple T-shirts he wore for learning in front of a laptop computer at home.

In-person school was back in session — even if it was a little weird.

The 17-year-old wouldn't actually head to the campus until 11 a.m. to make it to classes that would stretch into the afternoon. The buzz of hallway chatter was muted, students largely kept their distance from one another. Hang-out spots were still a thing of the not-so-distant — even if it felt that way — past.

"People are still a little weary of the pandemic. It's awkward," Mitchell said.

Still, he and his parents were relieved that he was physically back at school under a four-day "hybrid" model.

"For my son, it was difficult at first when we switched to online learning. I tried to help, but it was hard to figure it all out," said Mitchell's mother, Kara Cruz. "So I was thankful for him to be back."

The experience this day was radically different on the other side of the border in Long Beach. Mike Gallo, 43, told his three children — seventh-grader Karly, third-grader Keira and first-grader Evan — to abruptly log off at 9:30 a.m. from their virtual classes. Today's lesson would be one of civil disobedience.

In this Long Beach neighborhood, some fed-up parents were protesting the delaying of in-person schooling to Jan. 28. The Gallos were joining in to boycott remote learning and all of the stresses and angst that come from it. They headed to Cubberley School for a brief sit-in.

"We need our kiddos back in class as soon as possible," Mike Gallo said. "I don't understand why we can't get the option to put our kids in front of a teacher if we



Allen J. Schaben | Los Angeles Times

STUDENTS LEAVE campus after in-class learning at Los Alamitos High School. Across the county line in Long Beach, distance learning remains the norm.

mask up."

This is the dual reality of school life in neighborhoods smack dab at the border of Orange and Los Angeles counties.

"It's frustrating. Across the [San Gabriel] river, students are already back, getting quality education, as my kids fall behind," said Gallo, a salesman at Southern Glazer's Wine and Spirits. "It's like you're in a different world when you cross into Orange County.... We can dine in, students can go to school, and yet we can't do that in Long Beach even though it also has low COVID-19 rates."

In neighborhoods divided by governmental boundaries but that to the naked eye often seem contiguous, different academic experiences are playing out — for students, parents, teachers and everyone else involved in the process of teaching and learning.

The Gallos have neighbors whose children attend schools in the Los Alamitos Unified School District in Orange County. Fam-

ilies who share backyards and whose children play together are experiencing schooling in the age of the coronavirus in dramatically different ways.

It is a microcosm of the California experience, where counties have responded differently at times to state guidelines — sometimes out of defiance and sometimes because of the varying infection rates from one jurisdiction to another.

In Orange County, local leaders pushed for reopening and defying mask mandates. County school districts were among the first, and largest, in the state to resume in-person learning in September.

Meanwhile, students have yet to return to campuses in the Los Angeles and Long Beach unified school districts.

Long Beach's decision to push back the start date was made after consulting local and regional health officials, Long Beach Unified spokesman Chris Eftychiou said in a statement.

"The health data in Long Beach have stabilized somewhat but still present significant challenges to returning students to in-person learning," he said. "We believe that not perpetuating a cycle of opening and closing classrooms and schools will best contribute to stabilizing the learning experience for our students, and will allow parents to plan for the coming weeks and months."

According to Eftychiou, 67% of high school families said they wanted a hybrid model when it is safe. In a survey sent out over the summer, more than half of elementary and middle school parents also indicated their desire to return to campus. When the district pushed back the start date, parents and community members created a Facebook group criticizing the district. They complained of computer screen fatigue, inadequate instruction and lack of socialization for students.

"We empathize with those valid concerns, but unfortunately we're

still in the middle of a pandemic," Eftychiou said.

But the decision left Long Beach Millikan High School choir director Drake York unhappy. Internet lags and shoddy microphone recordings for a class dependent on synchrony and rhythm threw a wrench in the teaching methods he's perfected in his 11 years as an educator.

"There's a real pacing divide, and this is exacerbated with online learning. Kids who are successful accelerate and leave those who aren't in the dust," York said. "A lot of kids are taking on jobs or don't have a great internet connection, and the district-provided Chromebooks are pretty slow and inconsistent."

During his class, half the students kept their cameras turned off while others stared elsewhere. At the start of class, one student's camera was upside down, then 90 degrees to the left for two min-

See **Learning**, page R7

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HISTORY

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using a form that is so partisan, but doesn't express a partisan view about any election."

Spiak said about 50 people stopped by last week as the "Monument to the Unelected" was being installed on the lawn.

"People thought there was some kind of fanatical person putting up all these political signs for current elections," Spiak said. "When we started to explain, their reaction was both humorous and also melancholy about some of the people that they had supported and lost."

The signs are not historical. Although Katchadourian researched political campaign signs aesthetics, she designed each one herself with the help of Evan Gaffney.

In 2008, Katchadourian was commissioned by the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art to create new work for a show on the subject of humor.

During her first visit to Scottsdale, Katchadourian said she kept thinking about disturbing moments in American history and was struck by election signs.

"They're so particular to a North American landscape before an election. These things pop up everywhere," she said. "Although it sounds perhaps unlikely these two trajectories of thinking about the U.S. col-



Raul Roa | Staff Photographer

SIGNS ARE on display as part of the "Monument to the Unelected" art installation by Nina Katchadourian on the front lawn of an Orange home.

lided. I thought maybe there's a way to work with these election signs, but in a way that actually makes us think about our shared political past."

The Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art has committed to show the installation every four years since 2008.

Katchadourian recalled 2016 being a tense election year and thinks 2020 is also tense, noting the COVID-19 pandemic added a level of instability and uncertainty during the past seven months.

"[The installation] seems to mean something different than it ever has," she said. "It's been really interesting for me to see how much this piece seems to somehow reflect how much this next election is on people's minds."

IF YOU GO

"Monument to the Unelected" by Nina Katchadourian
Where: 896 S. Oakwood St., Orange, CA 92869
Info: grandcentralartcenter.com

In terms of location, Katchadourian said it was important to get the piece in front of audiences that would have mixed political leanings.

When thinking of potential locations in Orange County, Spiak said they were looking for contested zones and heavy traffic areas, and they found it through a Grand Central advisory board member's home in Orange and near North Tustin.

"North Tustin — while it does have quite a few liberal voices, it has a pretty conservative voice there as well," Spiak said.

This year, in a virtual event, the 59th sign will be planted by a local first-time voter at each site.

"That's important to me," Katchadourian said. "It's a way of bringing a young person who's going to have a long future — longer than me — in this country and live with the consequences of all the past decisions behind them."

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ZOEY LUNA

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auditions.

As soon as filming started, the actress already planned her outfit for the red carpet premiere. But with its release coming amid a pandemic, everything's changed.

There's always next time — a sense of optimism Luna didn't have when coronavirus started nixing future opportunities. But now things are looking up again. She moved into her first apartment in Fullerton. And thanks to Transgender Talent, her schedule is busy. "They really know how to

work with Hollywood," Luna said. "Thomas has been able to get me so many good roles and I have so much coming up soon."

But first is "The Craft: Legacy."

Will the installment play more like a reboot or a sequel? Luna teases that folks are just going to have to watch in order to find out. What she does promise is a shakeup.

"This movie is definitely going to break a lot of boundaries," Luna said. "I want to change the world with my art."

GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN is a contributor to Times Community News.

FILM

Continued from page R2

ques," which was submitted for the 2020 Oscars best international feature category, is also available for viewing.

The feature deals with a father who travels from conservative Bolivia to New York City to confront his dead son's boyfriend.

"Tu Me Manques" and the play that preceded it became a huge cultural driver in South America for people to come out to their families," Peña said.

"If you were going to come out, you were going to take your parents to go see it because the film is about what happens when that intimate relationship with your primary caregivers suffers because that secrecy creates so much heartache and division."

Payan said there's still a gap between the filmmaking industry and U.S.-born or raised Latinx filmmakers.

In fact, Latinx TV and film writers, showrunners and creators released an open letter calling for more action on inclusivity and representation on Thursday.

"It's still very rare to see Chicano films, Latino films in theaters," Payan said. "We really want to bring these films to the public and once people see them through streaming services, hopefully there's more distribution possibilities."

Take San Antonio-raised Robert Gonzales' "Boojale" series. The 20-minute megamix of South Park-esque animation shorts about Latinos living in the U.S. through a comedic lens — from breakfast tacos, a Chicano TED talk to a local bar getting gentrified.

Unlike in the past, the entire festival lineup is available online through the platform Eventive.

"We want people to know that they can have that same film festival magic from the comfort and safety of their own homes," Payan said. "If you buy a ticket to a film, your whole family can sit on the couch and watch it. So it's very affordable for your pandemic dollar."

The proceeds from the festival will go toward MASA's programming for 18- to 28-year-olds who learn how to produce film.

"Every year we really strive to program the festival with a real sense of optimism and hope and with the intention of creating a sense of community, place and belonging here in Orange County," Peña said.

"We want to bring the global and national dialogues that relate to us right here to your doorstep. That's more true than ever before because it's literally brought into the intimacy of your home environment."

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EXHIBIT

Continued from page R1

seeds that have gone into this current moment that we're living through as well as the possibility of imagining our way out of it."

Futernick stages photos of herself wearing a paper facemask to assume the identities of multiple presidential candidates — from Barry Goldwater to Hillary Clinton — in the "Concession" installation. Nearly all of the candidates are male. Each photo has corresponding green text panels where she weaves together fictional lines and direct quotes from their concession speeches.

Aschheim and Segovia will be the first set of artists to be highlighted in the monthly newsletter.

For the show, Aschheim focused on John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon. "November 14, 1960 (Key Biscayne)" are a series of

ink drawings of the two presidents meeting for an hour for a peaceful transition of power after Kennedy won the election.

Aschheim said they aren't necessarily failed presidential candidates since they both worked as presidents, but their terms were interrupted by either an assassination or resignation.

She used archival material, some of which she accessed through the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum in Yorba Linda.

"It just seems impossible that I could have even lived in a time period where there are people who are still alive that remember this afternoon and ... also are watching what's playing out right now. It's kind of mind-boggling to me," Aschheim said on the Zoom panel.

Aschheim also discussed the "365 Days of Voters" project, an Instagram visu-

al diary of voters documenting their stories and the communities they represent. Sponsored by the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder and arts commissions of L.A., Glendale and Pasadena, Aschheim takes headshot photo submissions and makes drawings to post on the account as well as to send a free physical copy to participants.

Segovia shared a video excerpt of "I Am Worth It, I Will Be Mexico's President," in which the artist explores the character of the latest female candidate who ran for presidency in Mexico — Margarita Zavala de Calderón, the wife of former President Felipe Calderón. The piece touches on the idea that machismo and the reputation of her husband played a role in her unsuccessful campaign.

"I wanted to show all the insecurities that she must have been feeling at the

time and the idea that she was never going to be seen as an individual, but always be compared to her husband in the same way that other female candidates in the United States might have been looked at like Hillary Clinton," Segovia said.

Stallings' plan for the 2020-21 exhibition schedule was to focus on women in conjunction with this year's 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment passage. Most of the artists featured in "Almost Presidential" are women.

"What's interesting is when artists deal with political and social issues because what art can do is help create a platform for discussion and can inject ambiguity back into a conversation where usually there's a tendency to immediately categorize," Stallings said.

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LEARNING

Continued from page R4

utes. It was just one small distraction in a schooling model full of them, he said. York said he tried his best to engage with the students for the first 40 minutes of class as he lectures on the foundations of music theory. He leads a lesson on rhythm using claps, encouraging others to join in. The remainder of class he provides time to work on assignments independently.

"I used to have over 300 students singing in one room. For them to be able to sing together and be able to socialize and grow together is what makes the class special," York said.

This time of year, York's class would be preparing for a retreat in the mountains near Yucaipa and their formal winter concert. Now, he is troubleshooting technology issues and trying to coordinate recording a virtual concert.

His job has become more time-consuming because of connectivity and technology problems, he said.

"The kids, myself and my colleagues are exhausted. We don't know if this is going to be sustainable for a semester," York said. "We're not even able to do tutoring or give valid assessment to the students on assignments with this time crunch."

York said he hopes the

district will look into accommodating choir practice outdoors as it does with other sports.

Los Alamitos High had a different concern: whether coming back to campus, even under a hybrid model, would lead to an increase in infections.

Just one week after reopening, on Oct. 6, interim Principal Greg Stone sent an email to Los Alamitos parents notifying them of the school's first coronavirus case. Stone said thorough cleaning will be done in accordance with Orange County Health Care Agency guidelines.

Supt. Andrew Pulver said the district is creating a COVID dashboard to track cases across school sites and has begun contact tracing at the high school with the health agency.

Last week, high school teachers threatened to strike for safer work conditions but called off the vote because of logistical issues, said David Eisenberg, high school director of the Los Alamitos Educators Assn.

The science teacher said colleagues thought the Sept. 29 return date felt rushed. And though the strike did not occur, Eisenberg said the district has provided new safety guidelines to alleviate the concerns that teachers have expressed.

That includes more fresh air coming in through the air system, new air filters and stricter regulations on

what qualifies as a mask, he said. "We're still scared about COVID, but we still love our students and we feed off their energy, and that's something I think the district got right," Eisenberg said.

Though many parents worry about sending their children back to school, others such as Christina Ynostrosa say the remote-learning experiment has caused tremendous strain. She burst into tears after a parent-teacher conference.

Ynostrosa, a sales and marketing director for a window film manufacturer, does not work from home, so she has to help her three sons — 9-year-old Aaron Villa, 17-year-old Elias Villa and 21-year-old Isaac Villa — get set up and hope they stay on task without her.

Elias, a student at Millikan High School, has attention deficit disorder and struggles to stay engaged.

"I know he struggled in class, but online is so much worse," Ynostrosa said. "Not that it's the teachers' fault, but a child can slip through the cracks very easily."

"I feel like I'm letting my kids down by not being able to look over their schoolwork. I don't downplay the virus, but I do feel like the district would be able to re-open and keep our kids safe."

STEPHANIE LAI is a contributor to Times Community News.

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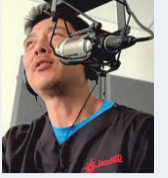
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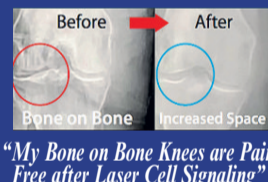
WHAT LOCAL DOCTORS & NURSES SAID ABOUT OUR EVENT



"I had osteoarthritis in my left knee & didn't get results from Hylauronic Acid injections & didn't want a knee replacement so after applying what I learned from the seminar I can now walk up and down the stairs without pain, and I'm also back to dancing & teaching my Zumba classes! So I am thrilled to have finally found a non-surgical option that other doctors never told me about."

-Linda L., R.N., Newport Beach, CA
(Registered Nurse & Zumba Instructor)

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-Rosemary, Huntington Beach



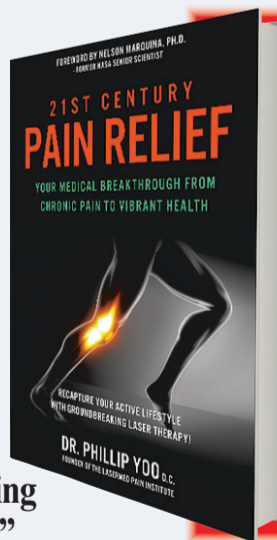
"My Knee X rays & MRIs revealed that I had a torn meniscus, baker's cyst and osteoarthritis. I had discomfort in walking and going up and down stairs. After attending Dr Yoo's lecture, I went to his clinic and only after two treatments on my knee I've had reduced swelling, increased motion, and decreased pain! I've been very pleased with the process, and I look forward to having additional treatments to alleviate my symptoms."

-Dr. William Gutch, MD., 84 yrs. Palm Desert, California
(Orthopedic Surgeon)



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