

## Arts OC survey shows effect of pandemic

More than \$121 million and thousands of jobs in Orange County have been lost in the industry since the arrival of the coronavirus.

BY BEN BRAZIL

The Orange County arts community has lost more than \$121 million and 2,700 jobs since the beginning of the pandemic, according to a recent survey from the nonprofit Arts Orange County.

Richard Stein, president and chief executive of Arts OC, said that arts organizations and venues are tied to social gathering.

"So, when it's not possible to gather that way in a pandemic, it really shuts everything down," Stein said.

As COVID-19 cases continue to decline and vaccines are distributed, some arts organizations can finally start to plan for recovery. Earlier this month, state officials said theaters and concert halls can reopen on June 15.

But it could be a long and arduous recovery.

The 38 organizations that responded to the survey predict it will take them, on average, until at least July 2022 to recover from the pandemic.

"That's hopeful," said Paula Tomei, South Coast Repertory managing director. "That's certainly not, I don't think, when we feel we'll be back."

Tomei said the theater is currently planning its 2021/22 season and hopes to reopen its venue in October.

It has a lot of recovering to do as the theater had to cut 45% of its budget and lay off or furlough nearly half of its staff.

Tomei said it's also hard to predict when South Coast Rep will be able to recoup its financial losses because it's dependent on whether the public is comfortable enough to see in-person performances.

"It's really going to depend a lot on our audiences — who's coming back, when are they coming back and how many are coming back — so it's still very unknown," Tomei said. "But at least there's a vaccine, there's optimism, there's a conversation about lights at the end of the tunnel that are bright."

In the meantime, South Coast Rep is providing virtual content to its audiences. A production of "Red Riding Hood" will be offered for free to Orange

See **Arts**, page R6

Parting, as Billy Shakespeare once quoth, is such sweet sorrow. And that pretty much sums up my feelings as I contemplate retirement after 55 years of reviewing local theater for the Daily Pilot and TimesOC.



Tom Titus

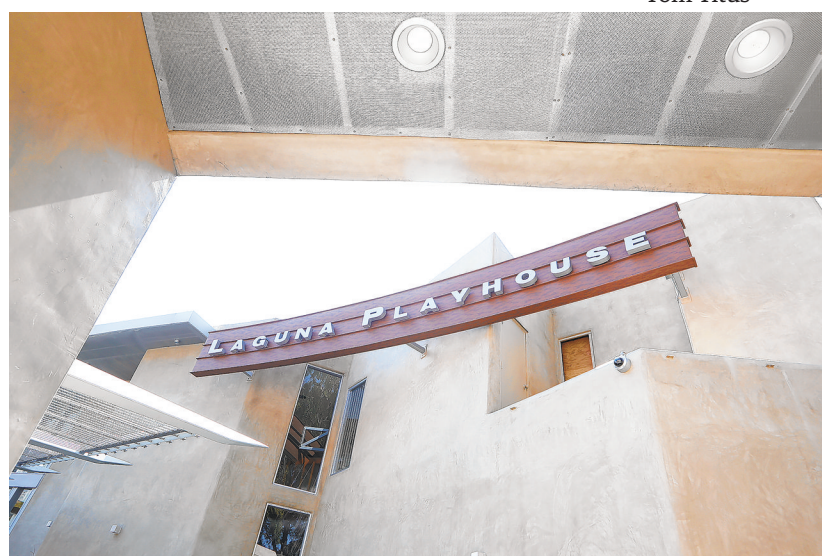
It's been a terrific ride for this dyed-in-the-wool theater junkie. And that includes 40 years as a participant — acting and directing for local playhouses, highlighted by 31 years as artistic director of the Irvine Community Theater.

I came to this calling as a reformed sports journalist turned theater lover by watching over 100 Broadway and off-Broadway shows on USO comp tickets during my final Army hitch at nearby Fort Monmouth, N.J.

Relocating from Pennsylvania to California in 1963, I landed a city reporter's job on the Daily Pilot. A little over a year later, I was reviewing my first show, "A Thousand Clowns" at the old Laguna Playhouse directed by Doug Rowe and starring a pre-"M\*A\*S\*H" Mike Farrell, who was a big fish in the community-theater pond at that time.

A few other local reviews followed before a young fellow named David Emmes dropped by the Pilot office for a chat with the theater writer about a new company he and Martin Benson were starting in Newport Beach. He called it South Coast Repertory.

Emmes' band of talented and energetic recent college grads had leased the Laguna Playhouse for the summer while the company members refurbished an old Balboa mar-



Don Leach | Staff Photographer

**THE LAGUNA PLAYHOUSE** recently marked its 100th anniversary. Tom Titus reviewed productions here and at other Orange County venues for 55 years.

ine swap shop that would become the Second Step Theater.

The first step had been performing as a traveling troupe. The third and fourth steps were yet to come — a converted furniture store in downtown Costa Mesa and the present two-theater complex in Costa Mesa's Town Center district with a Tony award on display in the lobby.

In Laguna, SCR presented an

introductory triumvirate consisting of "Tartuffe," "Waiting for Godot" and "Volpone," which they reprised when the Second Step opened in March 1965. I reviewed those shows and every play mounted under the SCR banner ever since — with one exception.

That single break in my personal

See **Titus**, page R5

## UC Irvine Health program treats lingering COVID-19 symptoms

BY BEN BRAZIL

Margaret Goldstein is still feeling the effects of COVID-19 five months after her diagnosis.

Lung damage, fatigue and a high heart rate are lingering symptoms for the Tustin resident, who declined to disclose her age.

"My problem really is my heart rate gets elevated very quickly and then I get out of breath with simple activities," Goldstein said. "I think the first time I noticed it, I was just making the bed. My heart started pounding ... My heart rate was so high, it was like 160 just from the effort of changing the sheets on the bed."

Goldstein is one of many who suffer from "long hauler syndrome," which includes a host of symptoms like fatigue, shortness of breath, brain fog, memory loss,

difficulty concentrating, joint pain, chest pain, anxiety and depression.

It affects between 10% and 30% of people who had COVID-19.

Starting a few weeks ago, Goldstein has been getting help from a new UC Irvine Health program that addresses the long-term impacts of COVID-19. The outpatient program, which had a soft open on April 1, has offices in Tustin and Costa Mesa.

"If we think about sheer numbers, 30 million Americans have been diagnosed with COVID-19, and so if we think 10% to 30% of these patients are going to develop chronic symptoms, that's going to be a staggering amount of patients that are going to develop these debilitating symptoms,"

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**PEOPLE WEARING** face masks walk on the Huntington Beach Pier during the coronavirus pandemic.

Raul Roa  
Staff  
Photographer



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# Black and Latino people disproportionately booked in O.C. jails, study reveals

BY BEN BRAZIL

Black and Latino people made up the majority of Orange County jail bookings between 2010 and 2018, according to a recent report from a UCLA research team.

Latino and Black people accounted for about 47% and 7% of jail bookings despite making up about 35% and 2% of the county's population, respectively. This indicates "significant racial disparities," the study said. White people accounted for about 39% of the jail population while making up about 41% of the county's population.

The research was conducted by Million Dollar Hoods, a team of scholars and activists based out of the university's Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies.

"Overall, the criminal justice system has shown itself time and time again to use racism as a driver to its operation," said Danielle Dupuy, executive director of Million Dollar Hoods and director of research and programs at the Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies.

Million Dollar Hoods conducted the study after it was requested by its community partner Transform-



Allen J. Schaben | Los Angeles Times

**ORANGE COUNTY** Dist. Atty. Todd Spitzer at a news conference last year at the district attorney's office in Santa Ana.

ing Justice Orange County, which aims to defund the carceral system and support people who have been impacted by incarceration.

For the study, the research team analyzed Orange County Sheriff's Department booking data.

"We know that the carceral system is really built as a part of the system of oppression, and that is reflected in the data," said Sarah Kahn, a UC Irvine law student and member of Transforming Justice OC. "Unsurprisingly, people of color are disproportionately targeted and persecuted by this system."

"We wanted this data presented so that it would

be easy for people in our county to understand what was happening in Orange County jails."

Kahn said one of the most glaring findings of the report is that charges related to substance use accounted for about 32% of all the jail bookings between 2010 and 2018. Driving under the influence and drug possession were among the three most common charges.

Driving under the influence was the most common charge against Black and Latino people. Drug possession was the most common charge against white people.

Though women made up



Gary Coronado | Los Angeles Times

**A HOUSING UNIT** for military veterans at the Theo Lacy jail in Orange.

about 21% of the bookings, they accounted for about 38% of the bookings for charges related to substance use. The report said this indicates a "significant gender disparity."

"It's very troubling to see that our county is engaging a carceral response to those kinds of social problems," Kahn said.

Transforming Justice OC is part of a coalition of social justice groups that is working to halt the expansion of the James A. Musick jail near Irvine.

The Stop the Musick Coalition believes incarceration is not an effective treatment for social ills and is advocating for devoting the \$289 million earmarked for the jail expansion toward social programs that

address the root causes of crime, such as homelessness or mental illness.

"When you start to look into the data more deeply ... why are we incarcerating people who may be possessing drugs?" Dupuy said.

"Do they have a substance use issue? Should they be treated in the community? These are questions I think that the community has the right to ask and the right to consider, especially when so much money is being poured into a system that doesn't seem to work."

In December, a judge ordered Orange County Sheriff Don Barnes to cut the county's jail population in half due to COVID-19. Barnes chose to fight the order but ultimately lost his

appeal.

Barnes and Dist. Atty. Todd Spitzer criticized the judge's order and claimed it would result in the release of dangerous criminals.

"A judge's ruling to reduce the inmate population in the Orange County jail system by half will release dangerous and violent criminals back into our neighborhoods to commit more crimes and victimize more people," Spitzer said in a news release. "This is not fearmongering; it is a fact."

Kahn said the study supports what social justice groups like Transforming Justice OC have contended, that a large portion of county inmates are not in

See *Study*, page R3

# County jails serving hot meals again after violating regulation

BY BEN BRAZIL

The Orange County Sheriff's Department said it has resumed serving hot meals in county jails, more than a week after a state board told the agency it was violating a regulation by not providing inmates with at least one hot meal a day.

The California Board of State and Community Corrections raised the issue after it was contacted by the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California.

The ACLU sent a letter to the BSCC in early April, contending that the Sheriff's Department hasn't served hot meals in its jails for about a year.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in dramatic shifts to the food that incarcerated people are served," the ACLU letter says. "Incarcerated people no longer work in the kitchens and instead are served cold sack lunches three times per day. The BSCC Title 15 regulations require incarcerated individuals to receive at least one hot meal per day. Furthermore, OCSD's Food Services Policy requires a minimum of one hot meal per day."

In its letter, the BSCC said the Orange County jails weren't complying with the hot meal rule in the Orange County men's and women's jails, the Intake Release Center, Theo Lacy jail or Lamoreaux Justice Center.

Sheriff's PIO Todd Hylton said in an email that the Sheriff's Department resumed hot meals on Monday. This was the same day the department received an email from TimesOC asking for comment on the BSCC letter, which was dated April 16.

Hylton said that the jails are now serving hot food with breakfast and dinner,



Don Barnes

including oatmeal, farina, grits and soup. "Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and mitigation efforts implemented within our facilities, hot meal services were suspended intermittently for the health and safety of those in custody," Hylton said.

Hylton said the Sheriff's Department notified the BSCC of the initial suspension of hot foods in April 2020. Hot meal services eventually resumed and then were suspended again in December amid a COVID-19 outbreak that eventually spread to more than 1,000 inmates.

"Each suspension correlated with an active COVID-19 outbreak in our jail system," Hylton said.

Alyssa Matias, who is leading the ACLU's advocacy efforts regarding the hot meals, said the county jails have been serving sack lunch meals with bologna sandwiches for lunch and dinner, and cold meals in the mornings.

Matias, who wrote the letter to the BSCC, said she's been getting updates on the meal situation from inmates.

"The bologna sandwiches come frozen, the meat is spoiled ..." Matias said in an interview. "They'll be served moldy fruit and moldy bread."

Hylton said that deli meats in the jails come in individually sealed packaging. "The products come from approved vendors and are subject to California Retail Food Code regulatory guidelines for storage, delivery, receipt, temperature control, etc.," Hylton said.

In its letter to the BSCC, the ACLU also said that the

Sheriff's Department hasn't honored the food needs of inmates with religious and medical diets. The letter said that inmates told the ACLU that deputies retaliated against them after filing grievances or reporting meal issues to the ACLU.

The ACLU included in the letter accounts from a few anonymous inmates who said they weren't getting foods that fit into their medical needs. Many of these individuals are diabetic or prediabetic.

"OCSD has not suspended and continues to provide medical and religious diets during the pandemic," Hylton said in response to the claims.

The BSCC said it will be conducting an inspection of the county jails to determine if they are providing medical and religious diets.

Matias said the ACLU is continuing to push for more substantial hot meals, rather than oatmeal and soup, including hosting a call to action event this Friday to mobilize the community to put pressure on Sheriff Don Barnes to "fully reinstate hot meals."

"What they're actually doing, and what we've heard from several incarcerated folks on the inside this week, is that they've started giving hot oatmeal," Matias said.

"Then we heard from one person that he got hot soup at night, but what he said was that he and everyone else is still receiving cold bologna sandwiches throughout the day. So, to the extent that that can be considered a hot meal, sure, but the majority of what they're consuming is still cold bologna sandwiches throughout the day."

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Marcio Jose Sanchez | AP

**THE U.S.** 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, which reversed a dismissal of charges in an O.C. case.

# 9th Circuit reversal of pandemic jury trial dismissal in O.C. case may foreshadow 4 pending appeals

BY MEGHANN M. CUNIFF

In an ominous sign for four other criminal defendants, a Newport Beach physician is due back in an Orange County federal courtroom after an appellate court reversed a judge's dismissal of his charges.

The U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals determined April 23 that U.S. District Judge Cormac Carney erred when he dismissed Jeffrey Olsen's 34-count indictment because of the court's pandemic-related ban on jury trials, sharply rebuking a constitutional stance that had become somewhat of a crusade for Carney.

The three-judge panel showed no sympathy to Carney's steadfast belief that the Central District of California's refusal to allow jury trials for 14 months violated defendants' constitutional right to a speedy trial.

Instead, they called his reasoning "troubling" and said they had no difficulty determining that his dismissal of Olsen's indictment was a "miscarriage of justice."

Carney was adamant that the right to a speedy trial can only be suspended if a trial is impossible, which judges called "an unnecessarily inflexible interpretation of a provision meant to provide necessary flexibility to district courts to manage their criminal cases."

"We find no difficulty in concluding that the district court's failure to grant the government's motion and subsequent dismissal of Olsen's indictment, under the unique facts of Olsen's case and the Central District's suspension of jury trials, resulted in a

miscarriage of justice," according to the 24-page opinion.

Olsen was the first of five men whose charges were dismissed by Carney because of the jury trial ban.

Bank robbery suspect Justin Henning and gun suspect Steven Nicholson were, like Olsen, already out of jail on bond, but Ronald Bernard Ware, a felon accused of gun possession, was freed from custody upon Carney's dismissal in January.

Gun, drug and immigration suspect Jose Reyes, alias Martin Mendez-Ayala was also to be released under an order from Carney, but the 9th Circuit halted that and ordered Carney to reconsider.

Meanwhile, jury trials are to resume in the Central District on May 10, and prosecutors have put their appeal on hold in Nicholson and Ware's cases, pending the final outcome of the Olsen appeal or an order from Carney.

In an email to TimesOC on Tuesday, Carney said he expects "there will be more appellate filings, perhaps even to the Supreme Court, before the mandate in Olsen is issued."

"I will not do anything in Olsen or in any other case until a mandate is issued," Carney wrote.

Olsen's attorneys at the federal defender's office have not yet said if they'll petition the U.S. Supreme Court to review the 9th's decision. According to its website, the high court accepts just 1% of those requests annually.

Under investigation since January 2011, Olsen was indicted in July 2017 for allegedly distributing prescription drugs to addicted patients and for supplying false informa-

tion to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. Prosecutors allege he knew at least two patients fatally overdosed on his prescriptions, but he continued overprescribing anyway.

He's been free on bond since shortly after his arrest, and for nearly four years he opposed any looming trial dates as too soon. That changed after the pandemic hit.

With trial already continued eight times, Olsen suddenly opposed the U.S. Attorney's Office's next postponement request.

Prosecutors argued the majority of Central District judges voted to indefinitely postpone jury trials as COVID-19 infections raged in Southern California, so the decision on whether to go to trial was essentially out of their hands.

Carney, however, was adamant the indefinite ban on trials violated the constitutional rights of defendants, and he pointed to ongoing jury trials in nearby Orange County Superior Court as evidence they weren't impossible during the pandemic.

But the 9th said impossibility simply isn't the proper legal standard, and that the Central District's suspension of jury trials was done with obvious care.

"The pandemic is an extraordinary circumstance and reasonable minds may differ in how best to respond to it," according to the opinion.

"The District Court here, however, simply misread the Speedy Trial Act's ends of justice provision in dismissing Olsen's indictment with prejudice."

**MEGHANN M. CUNIFF** is a contributor to TimesOC.

# TimesOC

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# UC Irvine’s IMCA staff prepare for a reopening after a yearlong closure

BY VERA CASTANEDA

After receiving the green light to reopen from UC Irvine this week, staff at the Institute and Museum of California Art are preparing a new exhibit, “Radiant Impressions.” The show will focus on 20th-century California painters and how they worked with light. From IMCA’s permanent collections as well as loans from private collections, the exhibit will include pieces by George K. Brandiff, E. Charlton Fortune, Elsie Palmer Payne, Arthur Grover Rider and signature works by Guy Rose including “The Green Parasol” and “Laguna Eucalyptus.” Upon reopening, IMCA plans to take safety precautions including requiring face masks, limiting capacity to 12 people at a time and limiting hours of operation. “Radiant Impressions,”



Steve Zylius | UCI

**MORGAN WYLDER**, an assistant conservator of paintings with the Balboa Art Conservation Center, carefully swabs a painting that’s being prepared for display at the Institute and Museum of California Art in Irvine.

on view May 15 through Aug. 15, was intended to be shown last year to celebrate Jean Stern’s retirement as the senior curator of California Impressionism at IMCA in July 2020. It’s one of a handful of exhibits since the forma-

tion of the museum. In 2013, UC Irvine officials learned from a trust attorney that an art collection amassed by Gerald E. Buck, an Orange County real estate developer, had

## STUDY

Continued from page R2

jail for violent offenses. Kahn said that both Spitzer and Barnes were “fearmongering” with their comments about releasing inmates. “It was factually inaccurate and I think it’s important that people in Orange County have a more realistic sense of who’s actually in our jails,” Kahn said. In February, Spitzer announced in a news release that he would be implementing initiatives to address mass incarceration and systemic racism. His comments were met with skepticism from progressive criminal justice reformers who believe his actions don’t align with his words. “We as a society have engaged in systemic mass in-

carceration,” Spitzer said in the news release. “As a prosecutor, I will stop it. We as a society have prosecuted people of color differently. As a prosecutor, I will stop it.” District attorney spokeswoman Kimberly Edds said on Wednesday that the office couldn’t comment on the study because it hasn’t had a chance to review it. In response to a request for comment on the study, sheriff’s spokeswoman Carrie Braun said in an email that bookings into the Orange County jail system come from all law enforcement agencies in the county. Braun also pointed out that not everyone in Orange County jails are Orange County residents. People are booked in the county’s jails if the crime that they committed or are suspected of committing

occurred in Orange County. “It is the responsibility of the Sheriff’s Department to provide care for those in our custody, but it is all Orange County law enforcement agencies and the courts that determine who come to the jail and how long they stay,” Braun said. Dupuy and Kahn said Million Dollar Hoods may potentially conduct more studies on Orange County based on what is needed by its community partners. “What COVID has shown in Orange County and L.A. County is that we can significantly reduce the jail population,” Dupuy said. “And because we can do that safely, why do we need to pour more money into building and expanding current jails? It seems like a waste of resources.” benjamin.brazil@latimes.com Twitter: @benbrazil



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# Santa Ana poet talks about coming of age in new book

Author Gustavo Hernandez discusses the making of “Flower Grand First,” Santa Ana, gay bars and body image.

BY VERA CASTANEDA

There’s no way Gustavo Hernandez could have avoided writing about geography. A sense of place factored into his life from the start. “You’re always so aware of the space that you’re inhabiting when you move from one place to another,” Hernandez said. He immigrated from Jalisco, Mexico, to Santa Ana with his parents in the 1980s. His dad was a landscaper, who had weed abatement contracts with Orange County. It made sense to write about where he was born and raised. It also made sense to collage a photo of his dad at work on the cover art of his first full-length poetry collection “Flower Grand First” (Moon Tide Press, \$15).

In turn, the book has a special place at his mom’s house on an altar honoring his dad, who died last year while Hernandez was finishing up the book. “Flower Grand First,” published last month, follows Hernandez’s coming-of-age story with an accompanying Spotify playlist that moves from “El Palomito” by Los Cadetes de Linares to “Caught a Lite Sneeze” by Tori Amos. The book serves as an elegy to his dad, his homeland and past versions of himself as he comes to terms with his sexuality and masculinity. TimesOC caught up with Hernandez last week in between virtual book talks for students at Santa Ana Unified School District, the same place where he read some of the books that influenced his poetry collection. In this edited and condensed conversation, Hernandez talks about the making of the book, Santa Ana, gay bars, body image and porn.

**Q What has the past year been like for you?**  
A The past year has been strange for everyone. I didn’t get to see a lot of my family for a long time. I was finishing up this book last year. After summer, I started writing the very last poems for it. It gave me some space to finish up the book in a way that was kind of cloistered. There weren’t a lot of real time things



Scott Smeltzer | Staff Photographer

**GUSTAVO HERNANDEZ**, writer of “Flower Grand First,” sits in his mom’s yard in Santa Ana. “Flower Grand First,” published last month, follows Hernandez’s coming-of-age story through poetry.



coming into the frame so I was able to let more of the past in, which is what I needed to close this book out. It was in the middle of all of this grief and death. This book also helped me grieve my dad and come to terms with my own mortality. It was just such a powerful sort of conclusion to the writing of this book.

**Q Why did you choose “Flower Grand First” as the title?**  
A Originally, the title was going to be “Just Bring Your Son.” It’s a line from a Tori Amos song. One of my mentors and the first person who took a look at the manuscript said he didn’t like the title. When my first publisher got a hold of the list, and he is the one that put those three words together. It’s so fitting for the book because they’re streets of Santa Ana. They’re also streets in a lot of other big cities so it adds this universality to it. It also goes with the structure of the book. Flower as in beginning to grow. Grand, which is the middle section about coming to terms with my sexuality as an adult and some-

times there’s that aggrandizing we do when we’re in our 20s. First, is totally my dad. Whenever I think of La Primera [First Street], I remember being in his truck on that street.

**Q Did you read other works about Jalisco and Santa Ana to draw inspiration or help you think about the landscape?**  
A I can’t say that I did. “Las Tierras Flacas” by Agustín Yáñez played a big part, which is where the quote that opens the book comes from. Yáñez was governor of Jalisco, and the book deals with the rancho and the introduction of technology to a rural landscape. As far as my research about Santa Ana and Jalisco — that was all through my lived experiences here and the stories told to me by my parents. If there’s one image about writing this book that always comes to my mind, it’s me sitting in my parents’ frontyard listening to them tell me about the old world. It wasn’t so much the written word. It was the spoken word, the oral tradition.

**Q There are so many poems about Santa Ana in different time periods of your life, but the poem “Santa Ana: Downtown” takes place in the present day. What was the inspiration for it?**  
A I wrote it after reading a poem called “Nashville” by Tiana Clark. It is about Nashville, racism, cultural appropriation, capitalism and gentrification. Reading that poem, I was instantly energized. Tiana Clark is a magnificent poet. It was such a gorgeous piece of writ-

ing. I thought it was important to write my own poem about my hometown and the issues that we are facing today. I finished my shift at work, and I stayed to write it because I had been rolling it around in my head that day. It came out almost fully formed in half an hour. I wanted to talk about what it means to live in Santa Ana and see its progression as the year goes on and the shift as gentrification descended upon the city. You have this new revitalization and this exorcism of these things that are seen as not being serviceable.

**Q I was drawn to the poems that reference bars or take place in bars. What is the significance of gay bars in your work and in your life?**  
A That’s one of the parts that I feel the most strongly about in the book too because some of those are my favorite poems. I know it’s not the same for everyone as they’re coming out, but gay bars — less so now, more so when I was coming of age — they were really important. It’s a place where you go and know there are people who are gay, you’re going to be safe and you’re going to be able to be yourself. The first bars that I went to were gay bars. I didn’t go to a lot of straight bars. Sometimes questions of sobriety come up, and it’s very difficult for people to navigate. We wish there were more spaces that didn’t have alcohol as a central thing. But bars have always held this magical energy to me. I still remember the first time I ever went to the Gauntlet. There’s a poem called “How To Be A Heartbreaker” that takes place at that bar. Now, it’s called the Eagle. I remember feeling like I found my community. I found people that looked like me. Going to bars in Orange County was a trip because the only gay bar that I remember was the Boom Boom Room in Laguna Beach. It was in this high-rent beach town, where there were all these people there who looked nothing like me. Going there for the first time, I was like, “Well, my life is over. I don’t fit in here. Is this what being gay is?” It wasn’t until I started discovering what you would consider the leather scene, that’s where I started seeing people who look like me, who I find attractive and who find me attractive. It was a big part of me coming into my own as a person, as a sexual entity. Maybe if you haven’t really struggled with your sexuality as much, a bar is just a bar. I never

dated anyone when I was in high school. All of a sudden, here are these people I could possibly date, and it just opened up this different world.

**Q There’s a progression that happens with your body from puberty in “Simpson-Maz-zoli,” shame in “How to Be a Heartbreaker” and “Body” to a confidence in “Pecs.” How did you go from “How to Be a Heartbreaker” to “Pecs” in terms of your body and how you feel about it?**  
A A lot of it came from being able to really look at myself, how to pay attention. In “How to Be a Heartbreaker” I’m trying to fit into all of these physical boxes, but I’m not really looking at what’s going on around me. I’m more concerned with what I think is the reality. It’s about where I found myself within the queer community and the roadblocks that exist in the community itself. I’ve struggled with my weight my whole life. This poem is more about how sometimes you walk into spaces and you’re not accepted because of your appearance so you try to reform yourself to become visible. The last line “Imagine above you/ a fat-cheeked boy, his belly keeping him/ there eternally, watching” — that’s how I felt at the beginning. It wasn’t that anyone was necessarily saying I’m not attractive or I’m too overweight. It was internalized traumas, internalized hatred for my own body because I wasn’t fitting into the Orange County Abercrombie & Fitch, six pack, blond hair, blue-eyed paradigm. “Pecs” takes into account my body, immigration and my parents. A lot of the beauty that I perceive in myself, a lot of the acceptance and a lot of what makes me attractive has to do with my experiences, where I come from and the people around me. There is a broadening that happened between those two points where I’m not focused on one thing. I realized that love and acceptance comes from a lot of different places. There’s a progression, and it took me a very long time. In the last seven years, I have come to love and appreciate my body. I’m heavier now than I’ve probably ever been, but I have never felt more attractive, which is a really crazy thing to think about when you torture yourself so much when you’re young.

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**TITUS**

*Continued from page R1*

record came in 2006, when I found myself in Hoag Hospital for a two-week bout with pneumonia. My son Tim stepped in to review “The Real Thing,” and I caught a later performance, so yes, I’ve seen ‘em all.

Seeing all those shows in 1965 served to give me the itch to try it myself, and in June of that year I snagged my first part, playing the cemetery lot salesman in “Send Me No Flowers,” the first production of the Costa Mesa Playhouse (then known as the Civic Playhouse). Twenty years later I returned to that theater to take a title role in “Father of the Bride.”

I graduated to more significant parts (Pulver in “Mister Roberts,” Paul Verall in “Born Yesterday”) before making my directorial debut with a play I’d written myself, called “Summer Lightning,” in 1968 at the Westminster Community Theater. It was my first and last venture as a playwright, but it launched a lengthy career

as a director.

The Irvine Community Theater was born in 1970, and I played the older brother in its maiden voyage, “Come Blow Your Horn.” Two years later I became ICT’s artistic director after a highly successful production of “You Can’t Take It With You” in which I had to take over the part of Grandpa Vanderhof at the tender age of 34.

Four decades of acting and directing reinforced my adage that doing theater is the most fun you can have with your clothes on. I played many characters but my favorites were Scotty Templeton in “Tribute” with my real son, Tim, playing my son and Herb Tucker in “I Ought to Be in Pictures” when my daughter was played by my real daughter, Mindy.

If I were to pick a favorite directing project it would have to be “That Championship Season,” but close behind would be “A Streetcar Named Desire,” “Pat-terns” and “The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial.”

I’d played Mitch in “Streetcar” a decade before directing it, and that show changed my life. I wound



*Jordan Kubat*

**RICHARD DOYLE**, Hal Landon Jr. as Scrooge and Kimberly Thomas in the 2018 production of South Coast Repertory’s “A Christmas Carol.” Landon played SCR’s Scrooge for 40 years.

up rewriting Tennessee Williams and marrying the actress who played Blanche, kicking off a 13-year run with Tim and Mindy the byproducts.

As a reviewer, as well as a director, I’ve encountered many unforgettable artists, actors and directors whose work was exemplary. Among them, SCR creators

Emmes and Benson as well as Kent Johnson, Hal Landon Jr. (SCR’s Scrooge for 40 years), Doug Rowe, Damien Lorton, Kathy Paladino, Mike Brown, Bob Fetes, Renata Florin, LaDonna de Barros, my own ex-wife Beth Titus and the golden-voiced Adriana Sanchez, whose vocal and dramatic skills would be a perfect fit

on any Broadway stage.

Now comes the “In Memoriam” segment of this farewell column, paying tribute to theater people with whom I’ve worked who left earth’s stage far too soon. They include Ron and Carol Filian, Chuck and Mary Benton, David and Betsy Paul, Wil Thompson, Tracy Godfrey,

Lois Farah, Ben Jutzi, Ron Albertsen, Marty Fuchs, Nick Sigman, Laura Black, Tony Grande, Phil de Barros, Bill Carden, Joanne Wolcott, Marthella Randall and my personal mentor, the lady who ignited the torch of my four decades in theater, Pati Tambellini.

I “retired” from ICT in 2003, primarily to spend more time with my new leading lady, Jurine Landoe — we’ve now been together over 18 years. But in 2007 the Irvine theater pulled me back in to direct “The Diary of Anne Frank,” my official swan song.

All in all, it’s been a full, exciting and thoroughly enjoyable life both as an observer and a participant. I really hate to ring down the curtain but I’ll soon be four score and three, and advancing age carries physical limitations.

Local theater will be back, albeit without me. When it is, I encourage you to go see a show and enjoy live performances in this most pleasurable of all artistic experiences.

**TOM TITUS** has retired from writing theater reviews for the Daily Pilot and TimesOC.

**IMCA**

*Continued from page R3*

been bequeathed to the university.

The scale of the collection was impressive — 3,200 paintings, sculptures and drawings focused on the art of California.

Three years later, Joan Irvine Smith and her son James Irvine Swinden donated more than 1,200 California impressionism paintings to the university including works by William Wendt, Granville Redmond and Edgar Payne.

Stephen Barker, dean of UCI’s Claire Trevor School of the Arts, announced the two collections were to be the permanent backbone of IMCA in 2017, and by August 2019 Kim Kanatani became the museum’s director after serving as deputy director and director of education at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York.

Three exhibits have provided small previews into the collections. “First Glimpse: Introducing the Buck Collection” showcased 50 works including artists Peter Alexander, Richard Diebenkorn, Viola Frey and Helen Pashgian. “El Camino del Oro” focused on paintings of California missions in the 1890s, and “Sublime Wonderlands” featured landscape paintings spanning from the late 1800s to 1980s.

Although the museum is set to be constructed in the years to come aligning with the university’s master plan developed by architect William Pereira, the interim gallery near the John Wayne Airport houses the latest exhibits.

During its yearlong closure due to the coronavirus pandemic, the space was used as part of a full documentation of the 4,500 works in the permanent collections that took

about two years to complete.

“The silver lining of this time is the galleries have been empty so we’ve been able to do work in the gallery with COVID restrictions,” said Dawn Minegar, assistant museum registrar. “We can bring works to the interim space that we currently have, and we can unpack them in more detail.”

Documentation of the museum’s inventory made it easier to bulk up its digital presence through Instagram, newsletters and educational virtual tours.

“We’re using Instagram as a vehicle to showcase the collection, and we’re taking an educational stance,” said Erin Stout, curatorial and research associate, who has spearheaded the account along with graduate students who assist with research.

Although the collection’s scope of 1960s and ‘70s Chicano artists is limited,

the Instagram feed includes work and tidbits from artists Carlos Alamaraz, Frank Romero, John Valadez, Patti Valdez, Gronk and Ester Hernandez.

IMCA’s monthly newsletter, with about 5,000 subscribers as of now, provides recommended readings, links and videos about artists like UCI graduate Chris Burden, who was highlighted in the April newsletter.

Virtual school tours, featuring an artist educator over Zoom, have reached about 1,500 public school students in Orange County. The tours also include paintings in “Radiant Impressions.”

Most significantly, the museum has made progress in its concept plans, which will be published in upcoming weeks.

When Kanatani stepped into the director role, she wanted to figure out the vision for the museum be-

**IF YOU GO**

**What:** “Radiant Impressions”  
**Where:** 18881 Von Karman Ave. Suite 100, Irvine  
**When:** May 15 to Aug. 15  
**Cost:** Free  
**Info:** [imca.uciedu](http://imca.uciedu)

fore moving forward with the IMCA’s building construction.

“We see IMCA as an epicenter for California art,” Kanatani said. “We envision our future building to be a very compelling destination that is both locally engaged as a cultural catalyst but also globally relevant as a seminal investigator and presenter of California’s influence with art.”

IMCA has conducted focus groups and reached out to stakeholders to talk about the term “California art,” including a discussion last summer with about 40

artists, scholars and former museum directors including Kevin Appel, Bridget R. Cooks, Scott A. Shields, René de Guzman and Chon Noriega.

“This is an advantage of being a startup,” said Kanatani. “We can learn from colleagues. We can learn from the mistakes that have been made in the past that the art world and museums are in the midst of grappling with as we speak, in terms of trying to reformulate their thinking about diversity at the board leadership level, not to mention in terms of staffing.”

In the meantime as IMCA takes shape, its three yearly exhibits and new digital resources could provide previews into art pulled from a collection said to be the best California art collection no one has seen.

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ARTS

Continued from page R1

County schools. The theater will also stream play readings to the public in an effort to continue their Pacific Playwrights Festival in some form.

The theater is also partnering with Mission San Juan Capistrano this summer to put on outdoor shows.

“We’re still not inside, so virtually a year and a half later we’ll be coming back, which if you would have told us last March that was what was happening, I think anyone in the field would have said, ‘Oh no, that won’t happen,’ ” Tomei said. “It took us a while to really accept the fact that we weren’t going to be able to produce live theater for a longer time than we had planned.”

The pandemic also took a toll on smaller arts organizations.

After the stay-at-home order in March 2020, Relampago del Cielo Grupo Folklórico, a Santa Ana-based cultural arts nonprofit, suddenly needed to find a way to engage with the more than 300 kids who take its weekly dancing classes.

The organization, which supports the preservation of traditional Mexican performing arts, decided to offer online classes.

Marlene Peña-Marín, artistic director for Relampago del Cielo Grupo Folklórico, said the organization offered the classes for free to help financially ailing families. The organization hosts kids from Santa Ana, Garden Grove, Anaheim and Tustin.

A little more than 100 kids took the online classes during the pandemic.

“We realized that at this point, we didn’t know if families were losing their jobs or whether they were able to work,” Peña-Marín said. “Obviously, the extra-curricular activities were not going to be a priority. Putting food on the table becomes a priority. So we decided to stop charging tuition altogether.”

Peña-Marín said the organization has lost about



Jordan Kubat | South Coast Repertory

**BRIAN VAUGHN** performs the title song “She Loves Me” in South Coast Repertory’s rendition.

\$700,000 in revenue, stemming from the halted tuition and inability to perform. The nonprofit had an ongoing contract to perform for a couple of Disney shows, which in the past provided a substantial sum for the organization.

Peña-Marín said they were able to “keep the lights on” with the help of a \$50,000 CARES Act grant and \$11,000 grant from the city of Santa Ana. The nonprofit has also used up a fair amount of its reserves.

Despite the financial hurdles, the nonprofit was able to keep all of its teachers.

The organization has reopened its doors for in-person classes and is back to charging \$45 a month. It will still offer classes online for those who aren’t comfortable returning yet.

Peña-Marín believes the organization could recover within six months to a year. “What we charge monthly is minimal in comparison to what other dance studios charge, we really try to keep it as affordable as possible,” Peña-Marín said. “I always tell everyone that we work out of a box, but how we do it is amazing. And it really is through the commitment of our staff and of our board.”

The Heritage Museum of

Orange County got creative over the last year.

Jamie Hiber, executive director of the museum, said the nonprofit created a blog and podcast and held virtual field trips to stay engaged with their members through the pandemic.

The online content has delved into topics such as unknown heroes in the Black community and the mass removal of gay and lesbian workers from U.S. government positions in the mid-1900s known as the Lavender Scare.

The museum’s membership doubled. However, the museum lost nearly all of its revenue sources during the pandemic and became completely donor-driven. The museum’s primary income comes from field trips, weddings and other events.

Hiber said they had to cut staff from 23 to eight members. The members who were laid off primarily worked during field trips and weddings.

“Until we can get those field trips going, I can’t really bring any of them back, which is really hard because we’re like family,” Hiber said. “It’s difficult, personally, but professionally, I just can’t.”

“I am starting to slowly bring one or two people back to help with these

weddings as we get going. But it’s not going to be all at once. It’s definitely going to be a slow process.”

The museum is reopening on Sunday, but it will continue its blog and podcast.

Hiber said it may take about two years at least for the museum to recover from the financial toll of the pandemic. While other revenue sources may return, it may take a while for field trips to become a regular occurrence. Hiber said they have been in discussions with school districts, and they aren’t going to be planning field trips until possibly 2023.

The museum does have its first wedding scheduled for Saturday.

“So I know that revenue will start coming in from that, but the canceled weddings and the refunds just about did us in,” Hiber said. “It was awful.”

Some of these arts organizations may get more outside help. Arts OC has been urging federal, state and local governments to provide funding to the arts community.

On Tuesday, the Orange County Board of Supervisors approved \$5 million for arts-related small businesses and nonprofits.

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PROGRAM

Continued from page R1

said Dr. Long-Co Nguyen, who oversees the program.

Researchers around the country are working to better understand long hauler syndrome. Not much is currently known.

The National Institutes of Health recently launched an initiative to study the syndrome, also known as “long COVID.”

Nguyen said that they don’t know the cause of long hauler yet, but one theory is that the virus causes a person’s immune system to have an inflammatory response that persists for weeks or months after the virus is gone. She said researchers have not yet identified factors that could increase the likelihood of developing long hauler syndrome.

Someone who is suffering with long hauler may have symptoms left over from COVID-19, but they may also have new symptoms that they didn’t have while they had the virus.

“So far it seems like there’s no one that’s not at risk for developing long COVID,” Nguyen said.

UC Irvine’s isn’t the only program in Orange County. St. Jude Medical Center and the Children’s Hospital of Orange County also have long hauler syndrome programs.

Nguyen said it’s important that the medical community is now focusing on helping people with recovery from COVID-19.

“I think that we as a medical community have been so laser-focused on treating acute COVID and trying to figure out exactly how to care for them, but we haven’t really focused on the recovery,” Nguyen said.

The UC Irvine program is primary care-based. Nguyen said the goal is to evaluate each symptom systematically, then patients can be referred to a number of specialists to tailor the care to each symptom.

To address the common

long hauler symptom of fatigue, UC Irvine has a rehabilitation program to help rebuild a patient’s endurance levels to where they were pre-COVID.

UC Irvine also has a psychologist on the team to help patients with post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety or depression.

Goldstein said she’s been searching for a while for a program like the one provided by UC Irvine.

She spoke with one of the doctors in the program and was referred for cardiac therapy and physical conditioning, as well as a speech therapist to help with her brain fog and concentration issues.

In December, doctors found ground glass opacities on her lungs, which are gray areas that indicate that the body has had an infection. Goldstein will have a CT scan next month to see if the issue has improved.

While Goldstein’s heart rate has been treated with medication, she has continued to feel that her focus and fatigue issues were not being medically addressed. She said she’s excited that her doctor seems to have some ways to help those symptoms improve.

“As far as my tiredness goes, it wasn’t being directly addressed,” Goldstein said. “I was just surprised when [the doctor] had a couple of other things that we can do now to help speed my recovery.”

Nguyen said the UC Irvine program is currently seeing about 30 patients, but that will grow.

The program may also expand to other clinic sites to serve a wider variety of patients across Orange County.

“If the studies are correct, this is going to have a huge impact to our healthcare system because of these long chronic conditions and how debilitating it can be,” Nguyen said. “We expect that there should be, unfortunately, a huge influx of patients.”

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