

IRVINE WEEKLY

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EXCLUSIVE:

THRICE DRUMMER RILEY BRECKENRIDGE TALKS
ROCKSTAR DISRUPT FEST HOMETOWN SHOW IN IRVINE

BY: SHIRLEY JU

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EXCLUSIVE: THRICE DRUMMER RILEY BRECKENRIDGE TALKS ROCKSTAR DISRUPT FEST HOMETOWN SHOW IN IRVINE

THRICE IS AMONG ACTS FROM O.C. AND BEYOND PERFORMING AT THE ONE-DAY ROCKSTAR ENERGY DISRUPT FESTIVAL.

BY: SHIRLEY JU

The Rockstar Energy Disrupt Festival is exactly what the name embodies: rock & roll heaven. Described as a “new music festival experience,” this one-day touring festival brings together some of the biggest names in the genre of rock as a whole.

On Saturday, July 20, the all-star lineup – The Used, Thrice, Circa Survive, Sum 41, The Story So Far, Atreyu, Sleeping With Sirens, Andy Black, Four Year Strong... the list goes on – takes over FivePoint Amphitheatre in Irvine. If you attended Power 106’s The Liftoff at the same venue, you already know there’s nothing in the world that beats the Cali sun.

Seeing The Used on the bill sparks instant nostalgia, bringing back the good old days of Vans Warped Tour and emo rock. The

rock band consisting of lead singer Bert McCracken, Jeph Howard on the bass, Dan Whitesides on the drums and Joey Bradford on the guitar

“WE’VE BEEN TOURING A LOT (FOR US) ON THIS RECORD AND GET TO EXPERIENCE THE RUSH OF PLAYING MUSIC FOR PEOPLE EVERY NIGHT. GETTING TO SHARE THAT RUSH WITH THE PEOPLE CLOSEST TO YOU IS REALLY SPECIAL.”

-RILEY BRECKENRIDGE



THRICE - PHOTO BY DAN MONICK



MUSIC

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formed in Orem, Utah, in 2001. Eighteen years later, they still shut down every stage and every arena, performing hit singles “The Bird and the Worm,” “The Taste of Ink,” “All That I’ve Got,” and of course, “Blue and Yellow.”

Co-producer Sean Akhavan states, “We felt there was a void for a summer festival featuring rock/emo/screamo/ heavy rock bands.”

What’s special about this show is that only one act performs at a time, allotting all your eyes and ears on the artist who’s up to bat. Unlike Coachella or Lollapalooza, you no longer need to choose between which artist to go see, which oftentimes leads to the sacrifice of missing the set of another artist you love (and paid for).

Not only are customers getting the bang for their buck, they don’t have to worry about set time conflicts. How often are we trying to jet across the campgrounds or arena to catch 10 minutes of one set, before we have to jet all the way back just to catch 15 min-

utes of another set? Rockstar Disrupt means no interruptions or distractions – this is a full day of rock, free of stress and worry.

The Irvine show proves to be one of the most highly-anticipated dates, primarily because Irvine-bred rock band Thrice will be taking the stage

in the hometown they grew up in. The Orange County quintet came into fruition in 1998 by then high school friends Dustin Kensrue and Teppe Teranishi. Spanning over two decades in the game, Thrice is prominent for their unique sound laced with heavily-distorted guitars and genre-bending experimental styles.

In an exclusive with *Irvine Weekly*, Thrice drummer Riley Breckenridge states, “It’s going to be awesome to headline such a huge venue in the city we started the band in. I’m pretty sure it’ll be the first time we’ve headlined Irvine proper since we played house



shows back in the late ‘90s.”

Aside from their own set, Riley looks forward to the intimacy of having friends and family in attendance.

He adds, “Getting to see family and friends, and having them be able to see us do what we do. We’ve been touring a lot (for us) on this record and get to experience the rush of playing music for people every night. Getting to share that rush with the people closest to you is really special.”

That record is the group’s *Deeper Wells EP*, which was released earlier this year. Serving as a conjunct piece

to last year’s *Palms*, *Deeper Wells* is a collection of four songs created by a band who stays true to themselves while expanding and breaking down different genre barriers.

And still, it’s the combination of both OGs and new cats who appear on the lineup, bridging the gap between both old and new generations alike. This not only gives the up and comers a chance to rock out with the legends, but serves as inspiration for where they hope to take their career: all the way to the top.

Regardless, Akhavan reminds us that each band at “Rockstar Disrupt will be able to play with proper production.”

On top of the festival stage, there will be endless picturesque opportunities and on-site activations from all the latest in lifestyle brands. These pop-up experiences go hand in hand with the chill, laidback vibrations that the O.C. is known for. Whether you’re active on social media or not, this will be one day of genuine energy and a shared love for live music – not to mention good company!

The line-up was carefully handpicked by a team of rock veterans, of course, with the help of Rockstar Energy Drink as the title sponsor. In addition to being readily available for audiences to chill down and enjoy, Rockstar plays a crucial part in making this event what it is: summer’s premiere touring festival!

As far as Thrice’s return home, Akhavan states, “It will be very special for the fans.”

What’s not allowed? Bad vibes and bad attitudes. Tickets start at \$24.99 and can be purchased via Live Nation. Doors open at 1:30 p.m. with no re-entry. Meet & Greet packages are available too.





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FLAMING SAGANAKI

CULTURAL CROSSROADS AT ST. PAUL'S 41ST ANNUAL GREEK FESTIVAL

DELICIOUS FOOD AND COMMUNITY SHINE AT ANNUAL FESTIVAL IN IRVINE.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY: RYAN NAJJAR

As I parked my car and began to walk toward the shuttle taking people to the festival (the main parking lot was full), I began to think about how long it had been since I had a gyro. Too long, dear reader, far too long.

From the moment I heard about A Taste of Greece, the Greek cultural festival at St. Paul's Greek Orthodox Church in Irvine, I felt an ancient hunger awoken within me. The desire for large quantities of meat and pastries rushed through my body like the deepest breath I had ever taken. In short, I knew I had to get in on the festivities.

Besides the pleasant absence of drunk teenagers in ill-fitting suits, the shuttle felt like a party bus taking us to prom. I appreciated them taking care of their guests, and I had a feeling that theme would carry on throughout the festival itself. It was a short trip to the church, and my stomach was very much on my mind when I got out.

However, I didn't want to ignore some of the real rockstars of the festival, namely the many vendors that set up kiosks in the courtyard. They were selling everything from jewelry and home goods to Greek novelty T-shirts and hoodies. However, one vendor that particularly caught my eye hailed from Egypt, rather than the nation being celebrated over this weekend. His country is also the cultural root of many of the goods he had on sale. Traditional garments, papyrus scrolls, miniature backgammon boards and more covered the tables and walls in his tent.

"We import traditional items from Egypt, and we always get the best quality; we've never gone for the mass-produced, 'touristy' things," said the vendor. "We make our own work, and each piece is individual and unique. That's why they love our work."

"The jewelry you see here came out of the sea. There's coral, mother of pearl, abalone, even lava. I call those lava pieces 'the beauty of destruction.'"

I wondered what drew him to sell traditional Egyptian decorations at the Greek festival, and figured his connection might be with the Church itself. "I've been with the Church since 1997. I'm here every year for my beautiful church and my beautiful people. I live in San Dimas, but I always come around here with my friends."

As far as people who haven't been to



PEOPLE AT THE 41ST ANNUAL GREEK FESTIVAL



VOLUNTEERS POSING WITH HOMEMADE PASTRIES

the festival, he has this way of explaining the appeal of this and similar cultural events. He compared it to returning to one's homeland; "It's [getting to see] the way that people dance, the way they eat, the way they enjoy life. When you see the culture come to life, it's like seeing the country appear in front of your eyes."

That thought was wonderful, but as I wrapped up my discussion with him, my next thought immediately went to what awaited me on the other side of the courtyard. I had already seen the sign for pastries, which included some enticing pictures of baklava, but I knew I had to go for something savory first. Specifically, a gyro was in order.

It seems I had shown up right after everyone had gotten their first servings of food, so there was no line as I entered the clean white gyro tent. I ordered one for a cool \$8, and right as I was about to ask them how their day had been going, a hot gyro was being presented to me with a warm smile.

I had a slight worry that the quickness with which it was done would affect the quality, but nothing could have been further from the truth. The meat was flavorful and tender, the bread was pillow soft while having plenty of

integrity, and while I'm not a big tomato guy, the slices served well to freshen things up. The tzatziki sauce also helped in that regard, and the variety of textures made it a delight.

I was satisfied, but I knew I had a duty to be a thorough journalist, so I pulled myself up from my chair and wandered back to the food court to see what else would be in store. I saw a giant sign that said "Saganaki (Flaming Cheese)." At this point, I blacked out and suddenly

awoke standing in front of their booth. Reading that this would be "fried Greek cheese flamed in brandy" only made it more appealing, and watching the cheese crisp up and erupt in alcoholic flames was one of the most enticing things I'd seen in a while.



SAGANAKI (FLAMING CHEESE)

It's fried cheese on toasted bread and if you ask me, there's little one can do to improve upon that formula. Somehow, though, they managed to do just that, and I found this simple dish to be

about with texture and nuance (especially upon adding some lemon juice).

I also got to meet some wonderful people who sat down at my table shortly after me, and they were kind enough to give me the scoop on many of the other meal options. They had special praise for the pastitsio, which is

a Greek lasagna-type dish, along with the grape leaves and lamb, the latter of which they described as tender and subtly seasoned.

After we shared a cup of wine (their treat to me), I ventured off on my final mission: dessert. I made a beeline to the room where they had all the pastries

on display, and I nearly panicked from the sheer amount of delicious choices in front of me. Theples, melomakarona, ravani and more graced my vision, but it was the famous baklava that won my heart in the end.

This turned out to be a good decision. The flaky top layers complemented the chewier ones in a stunning dance, and I could tell that care was put into the creation. It turned out my intuition was correct; every pastry on display was handmade by church volunteers.

I found that to be a symbol of what was happening here. Members of this church, both Greek and non-Greek, came together to put all their care and love into an experience for their community to enjoy. Using their hands and hearts to full capacity, they invited people to see exactly what the desire to spread culture can allow for. Frankly, I'd be surprised if anyone thought they hadn't pulled it off. They love their culture, they love their Church, and they love the community that's welcomed them with open arms.

It'll be too late to attend this year's festival by the time this article comes out, but be sure to stay updated with St. Paul's Greek Orthodox Church for details on next year's festivities!



SALT SHAKER BY BRECK ROTHAGE

IRVINE RESIDENTS' ARTWORK GRACES LAGUNA BEACH'S FESTIVAL OF ARTS

THIS YEAR'S EDITION OF THE FESTIVAL FEATURES SIX IRVINE CREATIVES WHO WORK IN A VARIETY OF MEDIUMS.

BY: LIZ GOLDNER

PHOTOS COURTESY OF: FESTIVAL OF ARTS LAGUNA BEACH

Soon after Laguna Beach's summerlong Festival of Arts (FOA) invited people from around Orange County to enter its fine art show more than a dozen years ago, several artists from Irvine eagerly applied for admission.

This year, six Irvine residents are pleased to show their artwork in the festival, which opened on Friday, July 5. Three of these artists, working in printmaking, photography and oil painting, respectively, help to demonstrate the variety of work shown at the FOA.

Noriho Uriu is one of the longest running Irvine residents exhibiting at the festival. She moved to the United States from Japan in 1987 and to O.C. in 1998. Originally trained in realistic figurative drawing and painting, she studied printmaking in 2000, and soon began experimenting with intaglio, etching, dry point, aquatint, relief print, woodcut, linocut, monoprint and monotype – often combining several print methods in one work.

An exhibitor at the FOA since 2005, she is excited to show her work to visitors from around the country and the world. She describes her work in this year's show as "transience and reemergence," explaining, "I have long been interested in the cycles of life and in the border between life and death."

About her silk aquatint, intaglio and mixed media print, "Reemergence," Uriu says, "One can look down on a tree stump from above and imagine the teeming activity of an urban layout, as life reemerges from the life force of the tree." About her etching, aquatint and intaglio piece, "Loop Line: Life's Cyclicity," she explains, "Fading flowers are the symbol of the transience of life, and their return to bloom the next season represents the cyclicity of life." Her mixed-media drawing "Yuragi" is based on a Buddha image, and includes elements expressing the transition of human emotional stages and states of consciousness. Her print titled "Mapping" contains several layers of balloons, symbolically depicting an image of clouds.

Photographer Breck Rothage, displaying his work at the Festival of Arts for more than a decade, conveys his love of the seashore, with, "all of its variations of colors, textures and compositions." He adds, "The sights sounds and smells among the craggy rocks, sand and sea are unique, beautiful and ever-changing." With



SOUND TRIP BY HORIHO URIU

this vision, he shoots majestic waves from the shorelines of local surfing spots, including Laguna Beach and The Wedge Newport Beach, featured in the 1964 film, *The Endless Summer*.

The working title for Rothage's photos at the festival this summer is "Slow Fast." He explains that his photos from previous years have had remarkable sharpness and clarity, especially for such large images, and that people who saw them often remarked that they felt as though they were "there," that they could walk right into the ocean and the waves.

This year, Rothage decided to slow down his camera's shutter speed to create images with a softer appearance. With this new approach to conveying, "the character or personality of the ocean at the coastline," as he says, viewers are delighted to see this new work. He explains, "I do not care to document a specific place or location, but rather the ever changing compositions of colors, textures and motion – up close and personal."

His largest piece from this new series is the 72 x 48 inch "Painter's Stroke," with the characteristics of expressionist paintings. His 45 x 30 inch "Smooth Peak" features waves coming to a peak, as they often do at The Wedge. The contrasting 60 x 30 inch "Smooth Roll" depicts wildly rolling waves. And his 48 x 24 inch "Powder II" and 20 x 30 inch "Extract" have abstract characteristics,

as they are part of a category of work that he calls "Abstract Extractions."

Portrait painter Dennis Carrie, exhibiting at the FOA since 2017, describes his experience there: "The most important highlight for me is meeting people from all over the world who visit the Festival. I want people to see my paintings and to hopefully learn and be moved in some way."

Carrie's subjects for his oil paintings are often portraits of historical figures.



WINSTON CHURCHILL BY DENNIS CARRIE

About his "Frederick Douglass Seated," in this year's show, he explains, "Douglass was a man of extraordinary courage and eloquence who did much to begin the movement in the United States toward a nation of freedom to be enjoyed by all regardless of race. He possessed striking physical features that displayed his great strength of mind, courage, and character."

He describes Abraham Lincoln, the subject his "Lincoln Seated" portrait:

"Lincoln is universally recognized as a man of great character, courage, and honesty. He was responsible for making this country one of liberty to be possessed by all of its citizens." About "Winston Churchill," the title and subject of another oil painting, Carrie says, "I believe that Churchill was the one person most responsible for saving Western Civilization in the 20th century. This painting may inspire some curiosity in viewers to simply ask 'who was that man?'"

About "Protective Custody," portraying mug shots of eight prisoners from various nationalities, Carrie says, "I was inspired to do this painting after reading Eric Hoffer's book *The True Believer*. It is about World War II and about how people can be convinced to perpetrate unbelievably inhuman acts on other completely innocent human beings. Given that the desire to be good ought to be the ideal state of mind, we should never forget the evil of the past."

This year, the Laguna Beach Festival of Arts hosts 140 artists, exhibiting more than 1,000 pieces of fine art, including paintings, sculpture, photography, printmaking, ceramics, glass, furniture and jewelry. The outdoor festival at 650 Laguna Canyon Road, Laguna Beach is open daily July 5 to August 31, weekdays from noon to 11:30 p.m. and weekends, 10 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. (949) 494-1145, LagunaFestivalofArts.org.



MEMPHIS, 1968 BY DENNIS CARRIE

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Irvine Barclay Theatre is about to expand its horizons with more events than the venue has ever seen before. This consists of music, cabaret, dance, speakers, jazz and so much more. Beginning on July 12, the season will have the National Theatre Live screening of *All About Eve* starring actresses Gillian Anderson and Lily James. This will be followed by more events, including an evening of Broadway hits with Linda Edner, a lecture by CNN legal analyst Jeffrey Toobin and a night of music with Hamilton star Mandy Gonzalez.

President of the theater Jerry Mandel said that the 2019-2020 season is taking on a different path than the previous season with several more kinds of performances. Several years ago, he and his colleagues started programming an arc that is about to come into fruition this season.

"We started by adding a jazz series that has quickly matured into one of the best in Southern California. Then we added a Broadway-Cabaret series focusing on great voices. And of course, the Barclay has long been known as a leading presenter of contemporary dance," Mandel said.

The president added that he wanted to have a nice blend of different artists come join and not only show off their talent, but also bring an extra taste of the county.

"[We wanted] well-known names in the field, along with up-and-coming artists, and we try to add a SoCal element featuring the best that Southern California has to offer in that genre," he said. "We feel that the programming at the Barclay is finally hitting its stride and making itself known in the community."

Mandel also said this season is not just about presenting new art, but also about giving the community a place to belong.

"We want our patrons to feel that the Barclay is their home," Mandel said. "A comfortable and welcoming place for them to share experiences with great artists."

One particular event that Mandel hopes residents will experience at the theater is Chick Corea, a jazz trio with Christian McBride and Brian Blade, playing on October 4. And with numerous other performances coming up, everyone can expect something new and exciting that may be unexpected.

"A season is a year-long journey and I

always find something along the way that surprises me when I least expect it," Mandel said. "Never knowing what the surprise may be keeps me excited about what we do."

Irvine Barclay Theater opened in 1990, and from the start diversified with unique performances. Mandel said it's a place where audiences not only get to see memorable shows, but can be in a closer atmosphere with what's happening in front of them.

of 16 dancers from different professional companies who participate in a three-week workshop with four choreographers (Julia Feldman, Alan Hineline, Alex Ketley and Tom Mattingly) and perform original pieces. Over the years, the dancers have come from a number of different professional ballet companies, including Nashville Ballet, Richmond Ballet and Sacramento Ballet. Artistic director Molly Lynch said this event will have dances that

it or finish it on another company or another organization and we've seen over the years that at least half of the pieces that have been developing this project have gone on to be performed or premiered by other organizations."

As the founder of NCI, Lynch started it as an independent project. Sixteen years later, she's seen a lot of change because of the people who become a part of it each year.

"It's different every year because there are different choreographers that come each year," she said. "And what I've learned is I usually have about half of the dancers return and half of the dancers [are] new so there's sort of new

"WE STARTED BY ADDING A JAZZ SERIES THAT HAS QUICKLY MATURED INTO ONE OF THE BEST IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA. THEN WE ADDED A BROADWAY-CABARET SERIES FOCUSING ON GREAT VOICES. AND OF COURSE, THE BARCLAY HAS LONG BEEN KNOWN AS A LEADING PRESENTER OF CONTEMPORARY DANCE."

-JERRY MANDEL

blood being brought into the project, but there are also dancers who have been through the process so they can help the dancers get acclimated in the process."

The dancers spend up to eight hours per day working on their pieces. Lynch said with all the hard work they put in, it's the freedom they share that makes their performances special.

"I always feel like if you allow yourself to be open that you can develop something new and I think that's what we really try to do at NCI is allow the freedom for these choreographers to be open-minded," Lynch said.

For more information on the 2019-2020 season at Irvine Barclay Theatre, visit thebarclay.org.

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"The size of the Barclay allows us to give our audiences very intimate experiences with the people on stage," Mandel said. "You are never that far away from the performances and that creates a special energy between the audience and the artists that you don't get in larger venues."

One of the more intimate performances includes the National Choreographers Initiative on July 27. This event consists

may or may not be completed. This will give audiences the opportunity to ask questions.

"It's fully performed, but it's not fully produced. And the audience can offer their thoughts about it," Lynch said. "Sometimes we'll even ask the audience, 'What did you get out of it? What did you see?' At the end of it, the choreographers own their work and they have the ability to go and stage

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