

## WEEKEND ROUNDUP

## Supernovas and the Supernatural

Cosmic jazz musings, fear-based fine art, self-critical comedy and a Lovecraftian film series.

## COMEDY

## 'CLAIRE WOOLNER: A RETROSPECTION'

Oct. 29 at Union Hall, Brooklyn

A comedian based in Los Angeles who calls herself “a professional idiot and clown” as well as “inappropriate/weepy improviser,” Claire Woolner may ask a lot from her audiences, but she demands much more from herself.

Her own harshest critic (see above), Woolner taunts herself with voice mail messages in “A Retrospection.” The one-hander centers on her review of her greatest set pieces, which becomes a battle between her id and her ego. Her vulnerability may have the audience laughing or singing along with her in one bit, then in stunned silence as she loses it in another. But Woolner remains captivating throughout. Ultimately, her absurdism answers one question: What if the performance artist Marina Abramovic were a clown?

Tickets to the show, which is at 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, are \$10 on Eventbrite.

SEAN L. MCCARTHY

## POP &amp; ROCK

## LIZA ANNE

Oct. 27 at the Sultan Room, Brooklyn

A Georgia native whose career started with a hushed, folky debut in 2014, Liza Anne (below) has honed a more assertive sound and presence over the near decade since. Nervy, guitar-forward indie rock was a vehicle for self-examination on recent releases: “What a terrible discovery/ That the worst one for me is me,” Anne, who uses they/them pronouns, sang on one song from 2020. But their upcoming album, “Utopian,” reaches for more pop-oriented sounds and feels newly self-assured. Empowerment-core catchphrases (“It’s cool to care!”; “Don’t treat me like that!”) populate the record, which was inspired by Anne’s experience of coming out as gay and nonbinary.

At the Sultan Room on Friday, starting at 7 p.m., Anne will preview “Utopian,” which is due on Nov. 3. In celebration of Halloween and Anne’s rambunctious breakup tune “Shania Twain Is Making Me Cry,” concertgoers are encouraged to dress accordingly for a Shania Twain costume contest.

Tickets are just over \$25 on dice.fm.

OLIVIA HORN

## JAZZ

## 'MUSINGS OF COSMIC STUFF'

Oct. 27 and 28 at Jazz at Lincoln Center, Manhattan

One pleasure resulting from the evolution of Jazz at Lincoln Center is seeing (and hearing) the members of its 15-member orchestra flourish as arrangers and composers in their own right. This weekend, it debuts “Musings of Cosmic Stuff,” an interstellar suite from its own Sherman Irby.

A giant of the alto sax whose fleet precision as a soloist is always matched by a rich, robust tone, all-earthy feeling, impassioned swing and an ineffable soul-pleasing touch, the Alabama-born Irby has played with the orchestra, with some breaks, since 1995, and contributed many arrangements. “Musings of Cosmic Stuff” follows up on commissions like his sly and suave 2012 ballet, “Inferno,” which blends Dante’s brimstone with Basie’s and Ellington’s pulse and sophistication. On Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m., Irby and the orchestra, like Dante himself, will ascend from hell to the heavens, with music that ponders topics like supernovas and the birth of the universe itself. Neil deGrasse Tyson will be the host and narrator.

Tickets start at \$30 at jazz.org.

ALAN SCHERSTUHL



Claire Woolner stares down an audience member through an illuminated screen during her unnerving comedy show “A Retrospection.”

AMY BROWN CARVER

## KIDS

## GHOST STORIES

At the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Manhattan

Most families go to the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s galleries to view its collections. But these days, some are also seeking wayward spirits and other supernatural beings, both in the artworks and in the building.

Such otherworldly subjects are the focus of Ghost Stories, an interactive tour hosted year round by the company Fable and Lark. Although the tour is normally held every Friday at 6 p.m. and alternating Saturdays (including this one) at 11 a.m., the presenter is celebrating Halloween with additional times: Saturday, Sunday and Nov. 4 at 2 p.m., and Tuesday (when costumes are encouraged) at 3:30 p.m.

The tour, which lasts about an hour and 45 minutes (Tuesday’s version is a half-hour shorter) is appropriate for children 9 and older. Evan Levy, the company’s founder, discusses what different cultures feared and how art reflects those beliefs. Featured objects often include morbid 17th-century Dutch still lifes, funerary brooches, reliquaries (above) and memento mori, like skull-decorated medieval rosaries. And, of course, Egyptian mummies.

Participants can also hear about reputed visits to the American Wing by the ghost of a long-ago employee’s daughter.

Tickets for tours, which have limited space and require reservations by phone or email (info@fableandlark.com), start at \$37.50. (Museum admission is included.) Children 12 and under must be accompanied by an adult.

LAUREL GRAEBER

## FILM

## H. P. LOVECRAFT

Through Nov. 5 at Anthology Film Archives, Manhattan

Continuing into Halloween weekend, this retrospective highlights films indebted to H. P. Lovecraft (1890-1937), the author whose visions of monsters and dark realms have inevitably infiltrated cinema. (Although, as Alexis Soloski wrote in The New York Times in 2020, “to adapt a Lovecraft work is to reckon with a troubled and troubling legacy — blatant racism and sexual phobias blight much of his work.”)

Not all the films in the program are overt adaptations. Peter Weir’s 1977 Australian classic “The Last Wave” (on Saturday), starring Richard Chamberlain as a nightmare-haunted lawyer defending Aborigines in a case involving a strange death, can be considered a Lovecraft descendant, this series posits. So too, in a different way, the spindly, body-snatching creature in the 1982 version of “The Thing” (on Thursday and Nov. 3), directed by John Carpenter, who is also represented in the series with his strongest film from the 1990s, “In the Mouth of Madness” (on Nov. 1 and 4). Stuart Gordon’s “Re-Animator” (on Friday) puts a zany spin on an actual Lovecraft story.

BEN KENIGSBURG



“The Last Wave,” an unsettling 1977 movie by the Australian director Peter Weir, plays at Anthology Film Archives on Saturday.

JANUS FILMS

## This weekend I have . . .

BY MARGARET LYONS

. . . an hour, and I love fighting.

## 'IN LOVE &amp; TOXIC: BLUE THERAPY' ON BET+

If you like the concept behind “Couples Therapy” — real couples! going to therapy! — but you wish it had more of a high-conflict “Real Housewives” reunion energy — mad people! yelling past each other about unusual circumstances! — this British import will tick a lot of your boxes. In terms of soapy outrageousness, “Toxic” is luridly fascinating. Couples on the brink seek guidance from one of the show’s two counselors (including Jo, above) and attempt to rebuild and repair their relationships, even when it seems like the only thing the people have in common is how much they resent and dislike one another.



BET+

. . . four hours, and I want a docudrama.

## 'THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT' ON BRITBOX

Timothy Spall (right) is heartbreaking here as Peter, a religious and lonely closeted teacher who falls for Ben, a charismatic student in his 20s. Soon after he and Ben profess their love, Peter becomes ill and erratic; he dies shortly thereafter, and Ben sets his sights on Anne, a neighbor in her 80s. They too begin a relationship; she too becomes ill and dies. “Sixth” is based on a true story, and it maintains a tight, linear focus. The straightforwardness of the approach here makes everything feel realer and sadder. There are no flashbacks or split timelines, just an elegant, deep and disturbing portrait of murder and fraud.



AMANDA SEARLE/WILD MERCURY

. . . many hours, and adventure calls to me.

## 'ALONE AUSTRALIA' ON THE HISTORY APP AND WEBSITE

This Australian spinoff of the fascinating survival endurance series “Alone” got off to a slow start, with many of participants tapping out early. But as the season wore on, “Alone Australia” blossomed, especially as it narrowed to its final four, including Gina (above), one of the funniest and most philosophical contestants the franchise has had. A lot of “Alone” is a starvation contest, but misery is rarely a story unto itself. Any version of the show, American or international, is most interesting when it becomes a saga of ingenuity and transcendence, and the later episodes of “Alone Australia” do that. All 11 episodes of the season are available now.



HISTORY