

# Good Times

This week's fun at a glance. Where to go & what to see around town.

## Artbeat: Hollywood Muse

As we stride purposefully into the new decade, the barriers between our occupational pigeonholes seem to be disintegrating. Everybody is willing to try something new, if only in search of that great Californian grail, "The Experience." Writers turn to acting, directors start painting, actors take up ping-pong and all of them have decided to write a screenplay.

Director Stephen Verona first established his reputation as an innovative filmmaker with a cult classic, *The Lords of Flatbush*. His latest film, *Boardwalk*, features Ruth Gordon and Lee Strasberg and has been criticized in New York and praised in Cannes. It's understandable. The film looks and feels European. Slower than most American productions, Verona exchanged speed for visuals. He really is a painter's filmmaker, lavishing attention on the nicer details of each scene. Verona came to film as an artist and if the medium changes, the vision does not. He remains a talented painter. His latest works, *The French Series*, are large scale Realist acrylics. They demonstrate the same wry humor, the textured, multi-layered composition technique employed in his films. "The Meat-Sniffer," for instance, is a curiosity, filled with odd juxtapositions of detail. The paintings have a warm, continental charm yet always seem detached. Verona is the inveterate outsider and his distance is part of the way he sees. Continuing to mix interests in film and art, he is working on a screenplay about the New York art world called *Primary Colors*. The paintings will be on view at Mirage Editions-Gallery, (1662 12th St., Santa Monica) to the 18th.

The Downey Museum of Art



"The Meat Sniffer," painting by filmmaker Stephen Verona at Mirage Editions

(10419 South Rives Ave., Downey) is yet another privately funded institution beleaguered by the passage of Prop 13. In lieu of the traditional soporific fund-raiser, however, Lorenzo Music (the voice of Carlton on *Rhoda*) has arranged a Tournament of Celebrity Ping Pong for January 6 at 1 p.m. in Furman Park.

Ed Asner, Mason Adams and Robert Walden of *The Lou Grant Show*; Gavin McLeod of *The Love Boat*; Peter Marshall, host of *Hollywood Squares*; Herschel Bernardi, Jack Riley, Lorenzo Music himself and other such luminaries will take up paddles against supporters of art, table-tennis and T.V. Participation costs a tax-deductible \$500 or \$250, depending on whether the title "sponsor" or "co-sponsor" is more appealing. Determined tourney win-

ners had best practice their "Most Manipulative Moves" or "Best Form and Footwork" but they can forget the Gold Cups. Winners will be awarded original artwork by Bruce Houston, Gifford Myers, Phillip Cornelius or Neil Moss.

For the well-intentioned but not well-heeled, a \$25 donation provides Gold Circle seating at the event, a buffet and a good day's entertainment. Not only the pinging and ponging but mime schtick by Schwartz and Chung and jazz tunes by Nuance. For those who actually want to see what their hard-won bread is going to support, a rare exhibition of contemporary and antique Navaho rugs and chief's blankets will be on display at the museum thru February 1st. For more info call 861-0419.

—Hunter Drohojowska