



ILLUSTRATION BY MARK STIVERS

# The art of the comeback

BY DANIEL BARNES

**Due to ongoing demolition and construction at the** Sacramento Convention Center, the next California Craft Beer Summit will be held in Long Beach instead of Sacramento in September. That means that the title of “Best Local Beer Fest” is up for grabs.

There are strong contenders for the title, most notably the Capitol Beer Fest, the Track 7 IPA Invitational and the ever-expanding Coffee Beer Fest. But after a year’s absence, The Art of Beer festival is engineering a comeback that may propel it to the top.

“I never miss this one,” says Brian McGillivray, brewmaster at Truckee-based FiftyFifty Brewing, which won the Brewery Group of the Year award at last year’s Great American Beer Festival. As one of the more than 30 breweries and cideries scheduled to attend The Art of Beer on January 25 at the McClellan Conference Center, FiftyFifty will pour Eclipse, its famed barrel-aged Imperial Stout, as well as its award-winning, oatmeal cookie-inspired I Did It All For the Cookie.

McGillivray has attended this hybrid beer festival and gallery show since 2012, back when he was still working as a brewer for Sierra Nevada.

“I had never really seen or heard of an event that paired the beer with the art, and then some good food as well,” he says. “I knew at that point that I wanted to keep going back.”

The first festival was held in 2012 in downtown Sacramento, originally as a way for co-founder Rawi Nanakul to showcase his art. A former fight photographer who shot Muay Thai fighters in Thailand, Nanakul

began shooting breweries after returning to the States to attend grad school.

“I thought I should put on a cool gallery show to show off the progress, and then that kind of became a beer festival,” he says.

About 200 people attended the first The Art of Beer, and only two other artists besides Nanakul showcased their work.

“Every year we started adding in more artists because I didn’t have any additional work,” Nanakul says. “It evolved into this idea of bringing the community closer to the people that make the beer.”

By 2017, the festival had grown to 3,300 attendees. But a flurry of negative feedback such as long lines and large crowds persuaded Nanakul and the other festival founders to take a year off, scale back and refocus on the festival’s original mission.

The \$40 to \$80 tickets for this year’s event are capped at 1,200. Nanakul promises a more intimate experience with greater food options and fewer corporate sponsors, as well as pop-up pours from two “secret” breweries and an art auction to benefit the Make-a-Wish Foundation.

“It’s kind of terrifying to put yourself out there again after taking your first little bump,” Nanakul says. “I’m excited, but at the same time, I feel like I’m putting more of myself out there this time because we don’t have the corporate sponsorship and it’s more about what the four of us really want to do for ourselves.”

Restrictions apply.

## THE CREATORS OF TOSTADA THURSDAY

DINE-IN ONLY

**\$1**  
4PM - Closed

Now serving Margaritas & Micheladas.  
1413 21 Street Sacramento, CA (916) 492-0727

Jalapenos

## California Stage • Theater Creations

### JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK

California Stage in the R25 Arts Complex  
25th & R St, Midtown • Free parking • 916-451-5822

January 18 through February 17, 2019

# 60% OFF

**BUY 1 ADULT BUFFET AND 2 DRINKS  
GET 2ND ADULT BUFFET 60% OFF**

ORIGINAL COUPON ONLY • NO COPIES  
1 coupon per table. Not for parties of 10 or more. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Expires 01/31/19.

**SACRAMENTO**  
1402 Broadway  
916.930.0888

Sun-Thurs 11am-10pm • Fri & Sat 11am-10:30pm  
PARTY ROOMS AVAILABLE • NOW SERVING BEER & WINE

chinabuffetrestaurant.com

**China Buffet**

## Your Downtown Service Shop

<b>SMOG CHECK</b> <b>\$31<sup>75</sup></b> <small>(reg \$49.75) most cars. Call for details. Same day. Fast In/Out</small>	<b>OIL CHANGE</b> <b>\$26<sup>99</sup></b> <small>Call for details.</small>	<b>\$60 EMISSIONS DIAGNOSTIC</b> <small>w/repairs at time of service. (reg \$120) most cars. For renewal reg. only. Call for details.</small>
--	---	--

**SMOG** DIAGNOSTIC SPECIALISTS  
916 554-6471 2000 16th St Sacramento  
M-F 7:30-5:30 Sat 8-4  
sacsmog.com

STAR Certified

Use your smart phone QR reader for more specials

100% ScanOrLogOn  
goo.gl/SQAfuu