

People & Places



Rodney Atkins (center), performs at Concerts in Your Car at the Ventura County Fairgrounds on Aug 8 in Ventura, Calif. (AP)

Film

Cineworld CEO optimistic

Masks & app: Regal theaters to re-open

By Lindsey Bahr

Regal movie theaters have been closed for almost five months in the US due to the coronavirus pandemic, but they are gearing up to open on Aug 21. And this time it might just stick. Exhibitors have postponed plans several times as cases spiked in various cities.

Mooky Greidinger, the CEO of Cineworld, which owns Regal, said that almost all of their attention is on safety protocols and sanitization efforts as they gear up for the big day. Masks and social distancing will be required for employees and patrons, they plan to stagger showtimes and have an app that will allow customers to purchase concessions without lining up, as well as ticketing software that will distance groups in theaters. They've also invested millions in refurbishing 12 domestic locations.



Greidinger

Initially, Regal's US cinemas will show classic favorites at a discounted price before Warner Bros releases Christopher Nolan's "Tenet" on Labor Day.

Greidinger spoke to The Associated Press about their plans, reopening internationally (Cineworld is the second-largest theater chain in the world) and why he's optimistic about the future. Remarks have been edited for clarity and brevity.

**AP:** What's your policy on capacity?  
**Mooky Greidinger:** The capacity is varying from state to state and day to day. We are not experts and we are not here to judge the decisions of the authorities. What we are told is what we will do. We're not going to risk anybody.

The cinema sounds like a place with a lot of people and a lot of issues there, but at the end of the day, most of the time that someone is in the cinema, he is in his own seat, he's not walking around. It's not a wedding, it's not a party, it's not a restaurant. And everyone is facing one direction. And people, usually, while seeing a movie are not singing or talking. They're watching the movie. We have dedicated points when we enter and go out and we will stagger the showtimes.

**AP:** Masks are required except when eating and drinking. Is that up for the individual to regulate or are there going to be people in theaters enforcing the policy?

**Greidinger:** We will be strongly monitoring the entrance, the lobby area and the restrooms. This is for sure. There is no compromise there. We hope that now most of the people understand the importance of the mask. On the other hand when you sit in the movies and you eat your popcorn, it doesn't have to take too long. And 90% of the cinemas in the US are stadium seating. It's not just the distance between the rows, there is a difference in height.

**AP:** Were you surprised about Disney's decision to put "Mulan" on Disney Plus instead of in theaters?

**Greidinger:** In a way I was surprised, but it's not the first time something like this has happened in the last four, five months. Disney are huge supporters of the theatrical business and the theatrical window. Disney has their problems, we have ours. But Disney still has a great lineup for the end of the year, with Marvel and "Black Widow" and Pixar's "Soul".

**AP:** Would you ever explore anything like the Universal and AMC deal to shorten the theatrical window?

**Greidinger:** I think the theatrical window is an essential part of our business. I believe this is the wrong move in the wrong time. I don't see any substance in this model.

**AP:** Have international audiences been eager to get back to the theater?

**Greidinger:** We're surprised with the positive numbers. A lot of people are missing cinemas. Because of the situation in the US there are no big new releases, so in some cases we are showing back catalog and in some cases we show local (movies). (AP)



This cover image released by earMUSIC shows 'Whoosh!' by Deep Purple. (AP)



Cowell



Jacobs

Variety

**MALIBU, Calif:** Simon Cowell broke his back Saturday while testing his new electric bicycle at his home in California.

Cowell was expected to have surgery Saturday evening, according to a spokesperson for the entertainment mogul. Cowell fell off the bike while in the courtyard with his family at his house in Malibu. He was taken to a hospital and was said to be under observation and doing fine.

Cowell created "America's Got Talent" and serves as a judge on the show. He has also been the judge on "Britain's Got Talent," "The X Factor" and "American Idol." (AP)

**CALABASAS, Calif:** Kathy Jacobs says it's important not to discount people because of their age or height. She should know -- the petite 56-year-old is a brand new Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Issue model.

Jacobs, from Calabasas, California and who stands 5-foot-3-inches, hopes her appearance in the issue will help change readers' views of beauty.

"I'm just like so grateful that they took like a chance on me," says Jacobs. "Two things you can't change about yourself are how old you are and how tall you are."

The 2020 Sports Illustrated Swimsuit issue is online and on newsstands Tuesday. The cover features a trio of models -- Olivia Culpo, Jasmine Sanders and Kate Bock, who also each have individual covers.

The original swimsuit issue ran in 1964. It has been a launching pad for models such as Kathy Ireland, Christie Brinkley, Elle Macpherson, Kate Upton and Ashley Graham.

Over the years the issue has tried to stay fresh, with painted bikinis, plus-sized models, unedited photos, tiny swimsuits, amputee models, older models and the addition of professional athletes and celebrities in relationships.

"That's the great thing about Sports Illustrated is they just keep reinventing themselves and they keep reinventing what is your view of beauty," says Jacobs. "And they keep showing people that there's more than one kind of beauty out there." (AP)

**SALZBURG, Austria:** Placido Domingo returned to Europe to receive a lifetime achievement award after a bout with the

Music

The 1975 offer one new great song after another

Deep Purple still mighty on Whoosh!

By Pablo Gorondi

Deep Purple, "Whoosh!" (earMUSIC)

"Whoosh!" makes it three-for-three for the pairing of Deep Purple and producer Bob Ezrin, an album that at its numerous heights evokes the band's most successful era of the early '70s.

With a stable lineup for nearly 20 years, the hard rock pioneers' new album is built on its best assets: Ian Gillan's robust vocals, the sturdy foundation set by the rhythm section of Ian Paice and Roger Glover, Steve Morse's inventive inventory of six-string tones and phrasings, and Don Airey's Hammond A-100.

An album's first song is not necessarily its first single, but "Throw My Bones," which is both, is aural candy of the first order and a magnificent reintroduction after the three-year break since the previous studio effort, "Infinite."

"Drop the Weapon," a call for de-escalation and wise choices; "We're All the Same in the Dark," a tongue-in-cheek, slightly desperate pick-up line; the decibel-denouncing "No Need to Shout"; and the haunting "Step By Step" all keep the needles in or near the red.

Even among top-notch individual performances and the ensemble's cohesion, Airey's keyboard excellence stands out and his and Morse's Bach-like runs on power ballad "Nothing at All" -- with plenty more potency than balladry -- are magnificent. As for instrumental "And the Address," is Deep Purple really saying goodbye or is its place in the running order, and the mere fact that it was re-recorded, only a tease in the way the Beatles fed the "Paul is dead" rumors with clues in songs supposedly confirming his premature demise? After all, the group's 2017-2019 tour was called

"The Long Goodbye" but concerts are planned, post-pandemic, behind this album, as well.

Written by the two members of Deep Purple's towering "Mark II" lineup missing from the current roster, Ritchie Blackmore and the late Jon Lord, "And the Address" is the last song on the album, but for a bonus track. It was also the first tune on the band's 1968 debut, "Shades of Deep Purple," so it is just a coincidence or are they completing the circle and really drawing the shades on their career? Any ensemble still willing and able to emulate its best years shouldn't call it quits after an album as good as "Whoosh!" -- unless Deep Purple wants to go out on a peak.

The 1975, "Notes on a Conditional Form" (Dirty Hit/Interscope)

Do you have time on your hands? Of course you do. Then there's no excuse but to dive into the hefty new 22-track collection from The 1975. Each time you think you've found the best song, another comes along.

The British quartet's "Notes on a Conditional Form" is a typically ambitious fizzy affair, going from the screaming punk of "People" -- urging us to "Wake up! Wake up!" -- to the almost sappy pop love letter to the band "Guys" that closes the album.

It's not too far from their last collection -- 2018's "A Brief Inquiry Into Online Relationships" -- with familiar touches, like dubstep, orchestral sweeps, earnest ballads, a random sax solo and even a song about America (this time the sly send-up of the religious right in "Jesus Christ 2005 God Bless America"). But the new album is far stronger.

As always, frontman and lyricist

Matty Healy alternates between being utterly sincere and sarcastic. He knows some people don't find him their cup of tea -- "mugging me off all across the nation" -- but he's not going to stop the painful introspection. "I've always got a frail state of mind," he says in one song. In another, an alarming musing for fans: "Will I live and die in a band?"

The self-titled first song has become an album tradition and this time the band has given lyric duty to environmental activist Greta Thunberg. "Shiny Collar Bone" is a throbby dance cut that has Jamaican dancehall specialist Cutty Ranks singing. "If You're Too Shy (Let Me Know)" -- with one of two assists from FKA twigs -- is so peppy it could serve as the theme song for an '80s half-hour comedy, except for lyrics about digital alienation. The rock tune "Then Because She Goes" should be the final song in a romantic film, while pure sweet pop awaits with "Tonight (I Wish I Was Your Boy)."

"Me & You Together Song" has a gorgeous, strummy, Manchester feel and perhaps the best opening line they've ever written: "I can't remember when we met/Because she didn't have a top on." That vibe continues with the drums on fire in "I Think There's Something You Should Know."

Not all of it works, like the flat "Don't Worry" despite the vocal addition of Healy's dad, Tim. And "Yeah I Know" is downright irritating. But on the superb, gospel-tinged "Nothing Revealed/Everything Denied," Healy messes with his fans, admitting he was lying when he said he once made love in a car, thereby undermining the band's totemic "Love It If We Made It" from the last album.

He can lie to us however he wants as long as there is music like this. (AP)

coronavirus, vowing in an interview with a top Italian daily newspaper to clear his name from allegations of sexual misconduct.

The opera legend's appearance Thursday to accept the award from the Austria Music

Theater was his first in public since recovering from the virus at his home in Acapulco, Mexico.

"It is a true honor to be here and witness the first few rays of happiness and hope

after having succumbed and survived the COVID-19 virus," he said. "In these past months of lockdown, we have known our fragility. Our theaters across the world have been closed and silenced. But it is precisely in these times we discover our inner strength and resolve."

Earlier, Domingo, 79, told La Repubblica that his illness made him "no longer afraid to speak out" about the allegations reported by The Associated Press that virtually ended his performance career in both the United States and his native Spain.

"When I knew that I had COVID, I promised myself that if I came out alive, I would fight to clear my name," Domingo said. "I never abused anyone. I will repeat that as long as I live."

In AP stories last year, multiple women accused Domingo of sexual harassment and abusing his power while he held management positions at LA Opera and Washington National Opera, with dozens of people saying his behavior was an open secret in the opera world. Most of the women spoke on condition of anonymity.

The allegations split the industry, with US opera houses canceling Domingo's engagements and Europe houses mostly sticking by him. He is about to embark on a busy fall European calendar, including performances in Caserta near Naples, the Verona Arena and Milan's La Scala.

Investigations by the American Guild of Musical Artists and LA Opera found allegations of sexual misconduct against Domingo to be credible. (AP)



Lilbeth Frondoso (from back left), producer Leah Marino, Chay Hofilena, Glenda Gloria, Rambo Talabong, writer/director Ramona S. Diaz, (from bottom left), Maria Ressa and Pia Ranada pose for a portrait to promote the film 'A Thousand Cuts' during the Sundance Film Festival on Jan 26, 2020 in Park City, Utah. (AP) -- Story on Page 14