

MONTEREY COUNTY WEEKLY



THE ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

Celebrating 25 years of the best fish wrap, birdcage liner and fire starter.

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LOCAL & INDEPENDENT



Tim Wood 40 Carmel Valley

Executive Chef at Carmel Valley Ranch

Because the food of the future demands the right mix of good ingredients, independence and irreverence.

The halibut in front of me is a revelation—and it's revealing.

First the revelation part: It's local, and—as any local chef worth her sea salt will tell you—it's impossible to cook without it turning tough.

"It gets sawdusty," Carmel Valley Ranch Exec Chef Tim Wood says.

Hence, almost all the halibut we eat, on a California coastline swimming with it, is shipped from Alaska. But this is delicious, tender, local halibut, perfectly moist. At one of the best-kept restaurant secrets between SFO and SLO.

The revealing thing: It's in a quesadilla, which says a lot. It reveals the chef's lack of pretense (A fancy top-shelf fish meets Mexican comfort food?), priorities (How many folks actually work that hard to stay local?) and technique (Does it get better than melting cheeses, keeping the fish moist *and* extending its flavors to mingle with avocado and jalapeño?).

Wood is a hospitality lifer. He lied about his age to become a dishwasher when he was 13, rose to short order cook

in short order, sous cheffed in Manhattan then worked with Cal Stamenov for years.

He has a couple of key tools that make him perfect for the onrushing foodie phase of enlightened eaters: He's a natural taste ambassador, the kind who stars at chanterelle and chili cookoffs (and often wins) because he's so inventive and equally approachable. He's a natural educator, which will only draw more increasingly studious eaters and up-and-coming chefs to him. He's funny as hell—his Stamenov impression remains unrivaled—and humor will come in handy dealing with the inevitable stresses of popular restaurants and the food cost crises ahead.

And now he has the backing of a progressive resort that cures and keeps its own salts, lavender, honey and chickens while maintaining lush kitchen gardens and raised beds for each of the property's different departments.

"Those beautiful tools are all being used," Wood says. "We're learning more and more. And we're ready to continue to push forward." [MCA]



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25 for the Next 25**

The *Weekly* seeks out some of the movers and shakers who will shape Monterey County for the next few decades. (**By no means a comprehensive list.)



How do you determine who deserves recognition in a special issue of the *Weekly*, a 160-page behemoth that's been months in the making?

You fight. A lot.

You advocate, you judge, you recuse, you debate. You beg friends and neighbors and acquaintances: "Give us your best list. Who do you see around you and out in the community working to make a difference in a variety of places, from politics and policy to the arts and technology?"

Your friends, neighbors and acquaintances are flummoxed. They throw down their faves. The staff is flummoxed. They throw down their faves. And after a month of back and forth, an Excel spreadsheet, a list with 100-or-so names on it, emerges.

Then you whittle it down, which means another round of all of the above.

In short, you don't do the impossible. You merely attempt it. The resulting list is not comprehensive. The county is too vast and too colorful for that; 2,500 for the next 25 wouldn't be enough. But here are some special people who are doing important things.

And it's an ongoing and evolving concept. Should we start working on for 50 for the next 50 tomorrow? Hit us with your suggestions at letters@mcweekly.com. Because building a list like this takes a village.

—Mary Duan

Written by Kera Abraham, Mark C. Anderson, Sara Rubin, Arvin Temkar and Walter Ryce

Photos by Nic Coury



Jourdain Barton 24 Monterey

Theater actress, director and writer

Because she's a young theater insurgent looking to expand the intellectual playing field.

Jourdain Barton began working with Paper Wing Theatre Company in 2005 at age 15, when they were still in Salinas. She played Magenta and Trixie in *The Rocky Horror Show*, and has played roles in *Pippin* and *Six Women with Brain Death*. She's been steeped in Paper Wing's special concoction of fringe, camaraderie and daring, merged with her own indulgent and intellectual philosophy, which is a nascent pastiche of Charles Baudelaire, Frederick Seidel, Oscar Wilde, Dutch vanitas painting and deconstruction.

"In the decadent movement in literature," she says, "there was this obsession with symbolism, subtlety, aesthetics and artificiality. Now our society is extremely decadent, with no consciousness of it."

She calls morals "boring" and obsession with success "vulgar."

She's applying her world view to theater. She's directed two plays for Paper Wing—*Prometheus Bound* and *Macbeth*.

"I had no idea what I wanted to do with *Macbeth*. I had a deep relationship with the play since I was a child," she

says. "I wasn't going to have an ecclesiastic approach to Shakespeare. I gave the actors a lot of freedom. I think that's where theater should be going: a more democratic approach to performance."

It's not exactly about entertaining audiences, Barton says, adding many "loved" her *Macbeth*, and some "hated" it: "Apathy is so much worse than disapproval. I guess I'm doing something right. Or wrong, in the right way."

She was destined to do things her way. "[Being] transexual, there's no place for me in local theater shows. Paper Wing is the only place I can work."

Her next project, *Salome*, is her favorite play. And she would like to interject more of her writing and the direction of her theater art into the local scenery.

"When it comes to talking about things underneath theater, there's not a forum to explore it. It's really lacking. I think I can create that...This strange, surreal little place we live in is capable of producing extremely interesting things." [WR]