

CULTURE MONSTER

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5 DAYS OUT

Highlights of the week ahead in arts, music and performance

MUSIC

Jeremy Denk, piano
The Wallis, Beverly Hills
7:30 p.m. Wednesday
\$45-\$95

MUSIC

Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet"
Long Beach Symphony
Terrace Theater
8 p.m. Saturday
\$26-\$92

MUSIC

Patricia Kopatchinskaja in conversation
Hauser & Wirth, L.A.
8 p.m. Monday
Free

DANCE

"Adentro!"
Diana Szeinblum
REDCAT, L.A.
8:30 p.m. Thu.-Sat.
\$10-\$20

THEATER

"The Theater Is a Blank Page"
Ann Hamilton and SITI Company
Center for the Art of Performance, UCLA
Opens 8 p.m. Saturday
Through May 12
\$15-\$119

HEAR NOW MUSIC FESTIVAL

Pulling together local talents

The aim is to share L.A.-based composers' work with a hometown crowd.

BY JESSICA GELT

Hugh Levick founded the Hear Now Music Festival in 2011, he said, for one obvious reason: At that time you had a better chance hearing the work of Los Angeles-based composers in Berlin or in Paris than in L.A.

The annual festival, which runs Thursday through Sunday, uses a blind selection process to spotlight a variety of local concert music composers, including 19-year-old clarinetist Andrew Moses and 95-year-old percussionist and former Los Angeles Philharmonic member William Kraft.

"I wanted to give Los Angeles the gift of this music that is being written in its midst," Levick said. "Because I noticed that although there are many wonderful composers here, they were not being heard in Los Angeles."

Levick attributes the wealth of talent in Los Angeles to the city's location (as a bridge between East Coast cultural centers and Asia), the teaching opportunities at its many colleges and universities, and a film and television studio system that requires skilled players.

"Music in the Hear Now festival is quite complex," Levick said. "There is such a wealth of instrumentalists in Los Angeles that we have never had a bad performance in eight years."

The festival consists of four concerts at venues across the region, each featuring work from a range of composers. This year the lineup includes Grammy nominee Gernot Wolfgang, acclaimed sound artist Ellen Reid and pianist Sean Friar, who also teaches at USC's Thornton School of Music.

Friday's concert is an "electro-acoustic" concert in collaboration with People Inside Electronics, which devotes itself to live performances in the city. Each of the six compositions on the program (including Reid's "Stellar Remnants," presented in collaboration with Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra) combines acoustic instruments with electronics in one way or another.

All of the festival's music, Levick said, falls within the "classical idiom of today." This leaves quite a bit of room for experimentation in a new music landscape that is celebrated for its richness, experimentation, creativity and sonic diversity.

Chamber performances by the new music sextet Brightwork new-music and Lyris Quartet are also on the schedule, as are performances featuring a number of lauded sopranos including Justine Aronson, a member of Yuval Sharon's experimental opera company, the Industry.

Opening night at UCLA's Schoenberg Hall features the UCLA Philharmonia, the flagship orchestra of the university's Herb Alpert School of Music.

"While everyone else is going global," Levick said, "we are going local."

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Hear Now Music Festival

When: 8 p.m. Thursday at Schoenberg Hall, UCLA; 8 p.m. Friday at Throop Hall of the Unitarian Universalist Church in Pasadena; 8 p.m. Saturday at First Lutheran Church of Venice; and 5 p.m. Sunday at First Lutheran Church of Venice
Tickets: \$60-\$80 for two- or three-concert passes
Info: hearnowmusicfestival.com



AARON MORSE: Big Pictures Los Angeles

AARON MORSE'S "Philosophical Creatures" is among works in the show Laurie Nye has curated at Big Pictures Los Angeles.

GALLERY REVIEW

Fantastic universe

'Airtight Garage' offers magnificent ideas about creativity

BY DAVID PAGEL

In 1976, French cartoonist Jean Giraud (also known as Moebius) created "The Airtight Garage," a story about a pocket universe on an asteroid in the constellation Leo. Overseen by a mad scientist with all kinds of wild ideas about creativity, the miniature multiverse was a tinkerer's paradise, a utopian society and the best studio that an artist might imagine.

In it, visionaries and inventors did their thing: dream up and deliver original worlds that inspired others to think more freely, act more boldly and never stop marveling at the magnificence of it all.

At Big Pictures Los Angeles, artist and guest curator Laurie Nye has made her own airtight garage.

She has covered one wall and the entire floor of the gallery, which is about the size of a three-car garage, with pegboard panels. You get the sense that you're in the weekend workshop of someone whose ambitions are not measured by common sense or constrained by practicality.

In place of the tools that usually hang above workbenches, Nye has installed 27 works by 19 artists (herself included). Each painting,

sculpture, drawing and print is a world unto itself — and a whole lot more.

None has been made with an eye on what's trendy or marketable. Each reflects the vision of an individual wholly dedicated to discovering something that satisfies inner needs — which may not be known until the art gets made.

Visitors experience similar epiphanies, which multiply as you move from one work to the next. No single principle, theme or idea holds the show together. That's another way of saying that there is no sun (or center) around which all of its works orbit.

Yet chaos does not reign. Lots of links connect lots of works, forming clusters that overlap with other clusters.

'The Airtight Garage'

Where: Big Pictures Los Angeles, 2424 W. Washington Blvd., L.A.

When: Through May 12; open Saturdays and Sundays

Info: (323) 800-7670, bigpictures.la

For example, fantastic beasts appear in paintings by Andre Ethier, Helen Rebekah Garber, Rema Ghuloum and Aaron Morse. Figures populate many pieces, including Jennifer Rochlin's inside-out diptych, Hayley Barker's atmospheric abstraction, Erin Treffry's whimsical assemblage, Jade Gordon's enigmatic mask and Max Maslansky's fleshy reverie. Neither category is mutually exclusive, with many works doing double duty by fitting into both — and others.

Likewise the landscapes. The pictures by Kristy Luck, Spencer Carmona, Tyler Vlahovich, Brian Fahlstrom, Laurie Nye and Maysha Mohamedi have one foot firmly planted in the world of animated cartoons and the other in the reality of gestural abstraction. The combo sizzles.

The most mesmerizing shape shifting unspools in Fred Burton's "Diptych for Zap Mama" and Adam D. Miller's "Lava Lizard Mini" as well as JP Munro's Pointillist overdose and Jasmine Little's exquisitely detailed pair of stoneware sculptures.

With Nye's "Airtight Garage" a short trip away, you don't have to travel far to leave reality in the rearview mirror.

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