

# LA WEEKLY<sup>®</sup>

The L.A. Art We Want to See in 2015

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There's going to be more art in more places in Los Angeles this coming year. The Broad Museum plans a fall opening on Bunker Hill. Zurich-based Hauser & Wirth, which shows some big-deal European artists too rarely seen here (Pipilotti Rist, Isa Genzken), will open downtown. London-based Sprüth Magers will open an outpost across from LACMA, launching it with a show by John Baldessari, L.A.'s most marketable old-school conceptualist.

But that's OK, because more small artist-run spaces, or spaces run by former gallery employees wanting to escape the inflexible white box, are opening, too. So the idiosyncratic and small can distract from the polished and big. And hopefully, shows at places such as newly opened the Pit in Glendale or even newer MAMA downtown will be smart enough that all the extra driving will be entirely worth it.

It's better to have high hopes than low ones, and better to be disappointed that some performance or exhibition didn't meet those hopes than pleasantly surprised that it did. If you're pleasantly surprised, you may have been jaded going in. And who wants to be jaded? This is the optimist's view of what art in 2015 could look like.

As January begins, artist Anna Sew Hoy will install "FACE NO FACE" at Various Small Fires in Hollywood, in the project room hanging sculptures that wear jeggings and around the sculpture courtyard arranging faceless, headlike vessels made of clay coils. Some vessels will have reflecting pools in them. "A vessel becomes a room, which becomes the inside of your head," gallery owner Esther Kim Varet says in an email, and imagining what that might mean is kind of delightful.

A day after Sew Hoy's show opens, Park View, based out of a MacArthur Park apartment, will start its first full year with a show by artist Mark A. Rodriguez, who a few years ago made a book on conceptual art ideas for kids. One suggestion: "Post missing signs for things that aren't missing." He's interested in marketing and production rhythms of artists, and he's constructing a fictional studio space, where table legs without a top might lie on the floor and puzzles based on life-insurance ads hang on walls. Some of the same objects could reappear when Rodriguez has another exhibition at Emma Gray's Five Car Garage in March, a "blockbuster of a show," which should be idea-heavy in a playful way.

In mid-January, artists Elana Mann and Robby Herbst are launching their conference, Chats About Change, a sincere, critical look at what it means to be an artist who really wants to see change — in the way art deals with politics, in the diversity of art, in the way art and culture look. The chats, mostly held at LACE in Hollywood, include a panel on how to participate, since "participation is considered the democratic standard, while the structures initiating this participation may not be fair, just." There also will be chats about the spiritual and political, and the differences among artist, organizer and social worker. The whole thing, which ends with a cocktail hour, should have a down-to-earth, curious tone.

During February, choreographer Maria Hassabi will have a monthlong residency at the Hammer, moving with three other dancers through and around the galleries. Footage of past Hassabi performances, such as when she wrapped herself in a faded carpet at a benefit three years ago or fell down stairs in slow motion, show her and her collaborators being precise and ritualistic without taking themselves too seriously. It's gratifying to imagine museum visitors coming upon Hassabi and her troupe, not thinking much of it at first, then realizing how careful and intentional their movements are. Also in February, the Hammer Museum and

Also in February, the Hammer Museum and the new Leimert Park-based space Art + Practice, founded by artist Mark Bradford and arts patron Eileen Norton, will launch their first collaborative show. Artist Charles Gaines will be showing his music-meets-text work, *Librettos: Manuel de Falla/Stokely Carmichael*. Gaines combined the 1911 opera *La Vida Breve* (Life Is Short), a gypsy love story by Spanish composer Manuel de Falla, with Black Panther Party member Stokely Carmichael's iconic 1964 speech. This work will be in a largely African-American neighborhood with a rich history of music and activism. So seeing how it does (or doesn't) resonate will be fascinating.

The second week of March, LACMA's exhibition "From the Archives: Art & Technology, 1967-1971" will open. And the archives of LACMA's Art & Technology Program, an unwieldy project initiated by Maurice Tuchman, the museum's first contemporary art curator, are like nothing else. Tuchman had just moved to L.A. from the East Coast, and he found the industries out here intoxicatingly full of promise, so he decided to bring art and industry together. What could happen if you put an artist such as Claes Oldenburg at Disney or John Chamberlain at RAND? Conflicts, clashes and failed projects, it turned out, and some fantastic memos, which this show will include. Ideally, the exhibition also will reveal the telling gap between the sensibilities of the artists and the corporations, which had such a big effect on the Art & Technology program's unfurling.

When the William Pope.L and Elaine Sturtevant exhibitions open at MOCA late in March, the first at the Geffen Contemporary in Little Tokyo and the second in the Grand Avenue galleries, two different ideas of insolence will be palpable. Pope.L, who dragged himself across 22 miles of Broadway in New York while wearing a Superman costume in 1990, will have a 40-foot U.S. flag surrounded by fans aggressively flapping at the Geffen. "You feel like screaming, you scream," he's said. Sturtevant, who died this year at age 84, was always cooler, controlled. She rejected the idea that she should have any certain style, and "repeated" other artists relentlessly. The show should convey how surprisingly radical her great skill as an imitator felt, and how savvy she was when it came to choosing who to imitate when.

The Manifest Destiny Billboard Project that artist Zoe Crosher organized with the nonprofit LAND, installing billboards along the I-10 West, will be moving closer to L.A. as March winds down. The project started in Florida, and the billboards, produced by artists, occupy a stretch of freeway. Artist Bobbi Woods, who's good at being subtle and visceral at the same time, is in Arizona, for instance. Crosher (whom this writer considers a friend) has the stretch near Palm Springs, and her billboards appear in April. Drivers will pass images of a display of plants that's lush at first but progressively begins to wilt as they near L.A. It'll be too sensual and dark not to notice.