



## ENTERTAINMENT &amp; ARTS

## Halloween ballet and August Wilson's 'pillar': The best of L.A. arts this weekend



American Contemporary Ballet's performance of "The Rite" in 2023. The company is back with a spooky trio of ballets. (Anastasia Petukhova)

By **Jessica Gelt** and **Ashley Lee**

Oct. 11, 2024 8 AM PT

It's time for another edition of Essential Arts, the newsletter for readers who take the arts seriously ([unfortunately, not everyone does](#)). I'm staff writer **Ashley Lee**, here with my colleague **Jessica Gelt**, to bring you the news you might have missed and The Times' can't-miss cultural picks all over town.

## Best bets: On our radar this week

### American Contemporary Ballet

[The dance company](#) kicks off its 13th season with three haunting ballets created by director-choreographer **Lincoln Jones** and performed to live music. Each evening includes either “**Inferno**,” which stages a journey through **Dante’s** underworld, or “**The Rite**,” which chooses a young woman for a sacrifice. That’s then followed by “**Burlesque**,” which the press materials describe as “cinematic,” “gothic” and “slightly disturbing.” In other words, apropos for fans of dance and horror alike. Performances begin today and run through Oct. 31. Television City, 7800 Beverly Blvd., Stage 33, Los Angeles. [acbdances.com](#) (For more spooky events, features columnist **Todd Martens** has collated [the best Halloween events this month](#).)

### ‘The Piano Lesson’

**August Wilson** plays directed by **Gregg T. Daniel** are a feast. “[He] has repeatedly found ensemble magic in his **A Noise Within** productions,” [Times theater critic Charles McNulty writes in our fall preview](#). McNulty also [praised Daniel’s staging of “King Hedley II”](#) last spring. “One of the pillars of the Wilson canon ... ‘The Piano Lesson’ revolves around a dispute between a brother and sister over a piano, a family heirloom that holds secrets of the past and possibly the keys to a more empowered future.” Performances run Oct. 13 through Nov. 10. A Noise Within, 3352 E. Foothill Blvd. Pasadena. [anoisewithin.org](#)



“Derrick Adams: Selected Works” is currently on view at the Leslie Sacks Gallery. (Leslie Sacks Gallery)

### ‘Derrick Adams: Selected Works’

**Leslie Sacks Gallery** is showing works by the esteemed multidisciplinary artist that strategically contribute to a nuanced wholeness often omitted in popular visual culture. “Adams portrays Black people at ease,” [Times contributor Leigh-Ann Jackson wrote last year](#). “Altogether, the punchy pieces trigger a warm wave of nostalgia, emanate feel-good vibes and elicit knowing chuckles from viewers who see their own lives and communities reflected before them.” The exhibition is on view through Oct. 19. Leslie Sacks Gallery, 2525 Michigan Ave., B6, Santa Monica. [lesliesacks.com](https://www.lesliesacks.com)

— Ashley Lee

## The week ahead: A curated calendar



Evelyn "Champagne" King performs at the Fool in Love Festival in August. (Michael Blackshire / Los Angeles Times)

## FRIDAY

**“Robbin, From the Hood”** A 17-year-old math prodigy takes on capitalism and corporate greed in this play written by Marlow Wyatt.

*Through Nov. 17. The Road Theatre on Magnolia, NoHo Senior Arts Colony, 10747 Magnolia Blvd., North Hollywood. [roadtheatre.org](http://roadtheatre.org).*

### ***For the record:***

**4:05 p.m. Oct. 11, 2024** *An earlier version of the newsletter incorrectly listed “Three exhibitions” at Luis de Jesus Los Angeles on Sunday. The gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday.*

**Three exhibitions** Desire is at the center of Laura Krifka's figurative oil paintings in "Carousel"; Canadian painter Tristram Lansdowne explores the use of representational space through water colors with "Burrito Planet"; and, marking the centennial of surrealism, "Unlocking the Mind: Early Surrealist Collages" focuses on Nathan Gluck's World War II-era work.

*Through Oct. 26, closed Sundays and Mondays. Luis de Jesus Los Angeles, 1110 Mateo St., downtown L.A. [luisdejesus.com](http://luisdejesus.com)*

**Weezer** The band performs its "Blue Album" in full on the Voyage to the Blue Planet tour; the Flaming Lips open.

*7 p.m. Intuit Dome, 3930 W. Century Blvd., Inglewood. [intuitdome.com](http://intuitdome.com)*

**Hans Zimmer** The Oscar- and Grammy-winning film composer and music producer performs newly arranged concert suites from "Gladiator," "Pirates of the Caribbean," "The Dark Knight," "Dune" and more.

*8 p.m. Crypto.com Arena, 1111 S. Figueroa St., downtown L.A.*

## **SATURDAY**

**Broadway Night Lights** Returning after a six-year break, the festival offers art, music and entertainment, in addition to the district's usual food and shopping. Evelyn "Champagne" King is among the scheduled performers.

*4 p.m. to midnight. Broadway, 3rd to 8th streets, downtown L.A.*

*[broadwaynightlights.com](http://broadwaynightlights.com)*

**"Counter/Surveillance: Control, Privacy, Agency"** A bird's-eye view of the Cold War-era practices used by authoritarian regimes and the ways artists responded to the surveillance state is examined in this exhibit.

*Fridays to Sundays, through Oct. 19, 2025. Wende Museum, 10808 Culver Blvd., Culver City. [wendemuseum.org](http://wendemuseum.org)*



**Lautaro Tissera Favaloro** “A Guitar in the Buenos Aires Night” blends tango, Milonga and folk with classical music.

*7:30 p.m. Collage: A Place for Art and Culture, 731 S. Pacific Ave., San Pedro.*  
[collageartculture.org](http://collageartculture.org)

**Billy Joel** The Piano Man tickles the ivories and rocks the latest addition to L.A.’s large-venue musical landscape.

*8 p.m. Intuit Dome, 3930 W. Century Blvd., Inglewood.* [intuitdome.com](http://intuitdome.com)

**Christina Ramberg** A retrospective of the artist, known for her depictions of stylized, fragmented female bodies, features more than 100 works, including paintings, quilts and archival ephemera.

*Through Jan. 5. UCLA Hammer Museum, 10899 Wilshire Blvd., Westwood.*  
[hammer.ucla.edu](http://hammer.ucla.edu)

**“Spadura”** A one-woman comedy show, written and performed by Dahéli Hall, chronicling the unique fertility obstacles faced by Black women in America.

*7 and 9:30 p.m. Dynasty Typewriter, 2511 Wilshire Blvd.* [dynastytypewriter.com](http://dynastytypewriter.com)

**“The Witches of Los Feliz”** Get your best coven together and get into the Halloween spirit with this American Cinematheque series featuring screenings of “Death Becomes Her,” “The Witches of Eastwick,” “Bell Book and Candle” and “Practical Magic.”

*Through Oct. 24. Los Feliz Theatre, 1822 N. Vermont Ave.* [americancinematheque.com](http://americancinematheque.com)

## Culture news and the SoCal scene



The Wallis presents “Sugar Daddy” starring comedian Sam Morrison. (Jason Williams)

Comedian **Sam Morrison**’s one-man show “**Sugar Daddy**” may tug at audience heart strings, but it’s surprisingly low on laughs, notes Times theater critic **Charles McNulty** in [his review of the show](#) playing at the **Wallis** through Oct. 13. The storyline revolves around Morrison’s quest to find a bear to love and how that partner’s life was ultimately lost to COVID in the early days of the pandemic. “‘Sugar Daddy’ does something that I haven’t seen much despite the extraordinary number of COVID deaths: It makes a record of one person’s sudden loss,” notes McNulty.

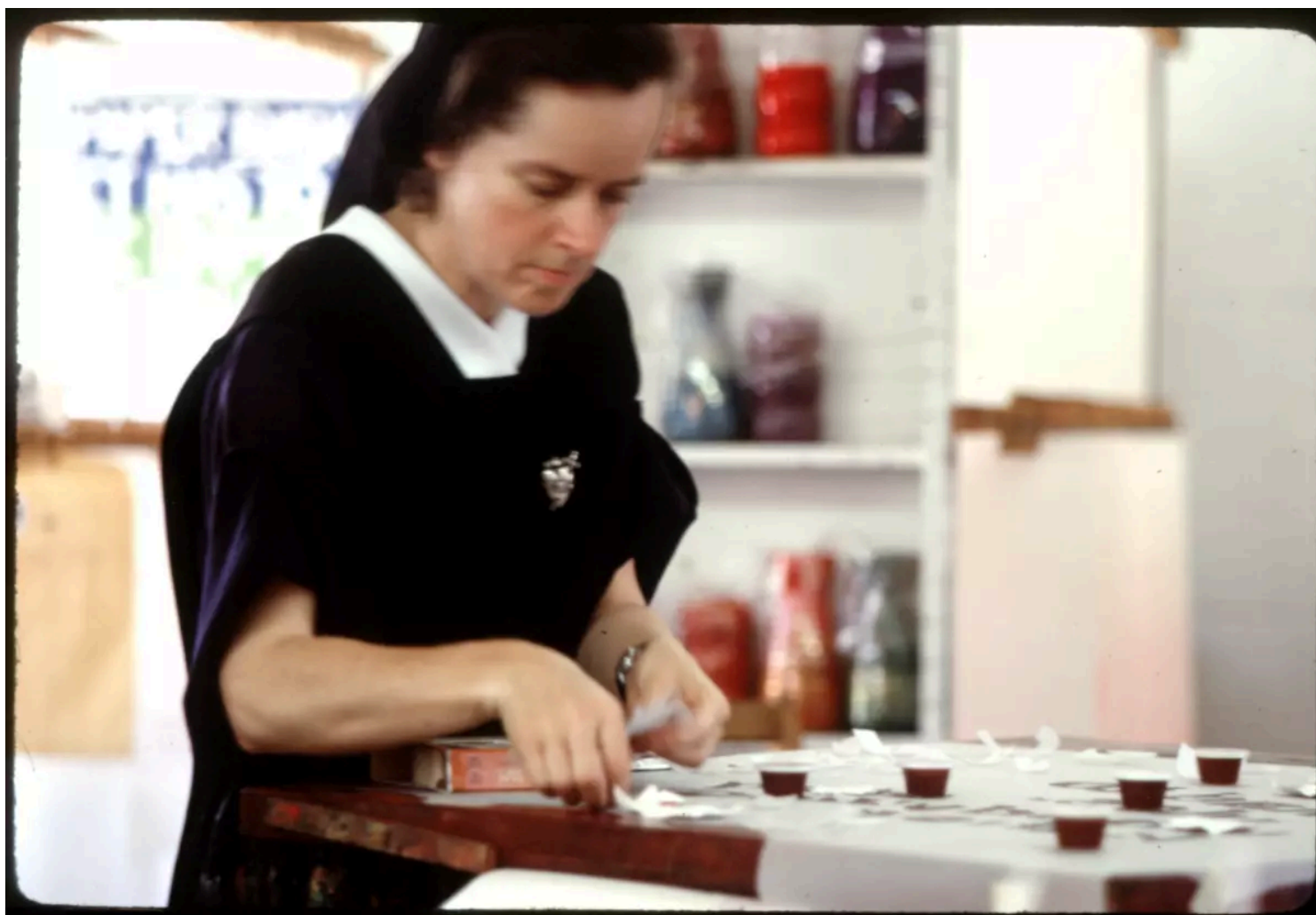
Times staff writer **Josh Rottenberg** [attended a reading](#) of the play “**October 7**” at **UCLA’s Fowler Museum**, which was timed to coincide with the one-year anniversary of the Hamas attack on Israel that led to the war currently tearing the region apart. Although tensions ran high, protests did not disrupt the reading, which was held for a near capacity crowd in the 324-seat auditorium.

**Eboni Booth's** play "**Primary Trust,**" which won the **Pulitzer Prize** for drama this year, is [receiving its West Coast premiere](#) at **La Jolla Playhouse**. It's a subtle, life-affirming play about a troubled 38-year-old man named Kenneth who drinks heavily alongside his imaginary friend Bert but finds help and friendship via the kindness of the people in his community of small-town Cranberry, N.Y. In his review, McNulty praises the show, noting: "How Kenneth's life turns around by the patience of other people is the miracle of this 95-minute drama."

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Artist Corita Kent (also known as Sister Mary Corita) is shown at work in her studio in an undated photograph. (Corita Art Center, Immaculate Heart Community)



The **Corita Art Center**, [which is devoted to the work and legacy](#) of **Corita Kent**, announced that it will be relocating its Franklin Avenue headquarters at [Immaculate Heart High School and Middle School](#) to a new spot in the **L.A. Arts District**. The new space is expected to stage its opening celebration on March 8. Kent, who taught at Los Angeles' **Immaculate Heart College** between 1938 and 1968, is best known for colorful pop art-influenced screen prints, posters and designs. To celebrate the move, the organization is unveiling a billboard featuring a work of Kent's called "hope" near the 101 Freeway at Western Avenue.

Broadway is feeling the loss of three beloved actors — **Gavin Creel**, **Maggie Smith** and **Adrian Bailey** — and the **Committee of Theatre Owners** [announced](#) that it will dim the lights of New York City's theater district in honor of all three. The recognition for Bailey is scheduled for Oct. 17 in all Broadway theaters. The dates for Creel and Smith have yet to be determined.

The **S. Mark Taper Foundation** has [awarded](#) **Center Theatre Group** a \$1-million grant in support of the company's newly reopened **Mark Taper Forum**, which kicked off a new era this week with the opening of the **Green Day** musical "**American Idiot**." The funds will be distributed over multiple years and will help keep the beleaguered venue afloat as it returns to regular season programming after a [controversial pause](#) during the 2023-24 season.

— Jessica Gelt

## And last but not least

["Splish Splash," "Mack the Knife" and "Beyond the Sea" on Broadway?](#) Starring Jonathan Groff!



Jessica Gelt

Jessica Gelt is an arts and culture writer for the Los Angeles Times.

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**Ashley Lee**

Ashley Lee is a reporter at the Los Angeles Times, where she writes about theater, movies, television and the bustling intersection of the stage and the screen. She also co-writes the paper's twice-weekly [Essential Arts newsletter](#).