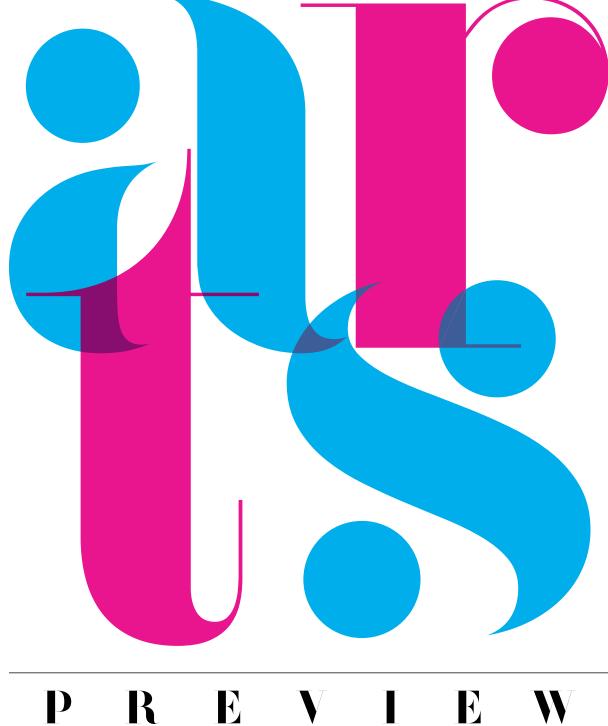
FALL ARTS



WITH DOZENS OF PRODUCTIONS TO SEE, ARTISTS TO MEET, AND PLACES TO GO, IT'S BOUND TO BE AN ENTERTAINING AUTUMN.







EVENTS NOT TO MISS

0 9/28-10/21: THE SONG OF THE NIGHTINGALE

Town Hall Theatre Company presents this Hans Christian Andersen tale in a musical adaptation by Bay Area native Min Kahng—set to pop, rock, and disco. Town Hall Theatre, Lafayette, townhalltheatre.com.

2 10/21-11/5: BULLETS OVER BROADWAY

Don't miss Tri-Valley Repertory Theatre's production of *Bullets Over Broadway*, complete with over-the-top characters and a sensational Jazz Age score. *Bankhead Theater*, *Livermore*, *trivalleyrep.org*.

Venue We 🛡

Lesher Center for

The Arts
The three stages of Walnut
Creek's signature venue are
abuzz this fall. Highlights include
Contra Costa Musical Theatre's
adaptation of *Billy Elliot* (October
13-November 11) and Center
Repertory Company's comedic
romp *The Liar* (October 20November 18). *Walnut Creek*, *lesherartscenter.org*.

10/26-10/29: AXIS DANCE COMPANY

For its 30th anniversary, Axis—comprised of dancers with and without physical disabilities—presents new work in collaboration with hip-hop orchestra Ensemble Mik Nawooj. Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts, Oakland, axisdance.org.

11/1-1/7: ALADDIN

See the stage adaptation of Disney's hit film on its North American tour. Fun fact: Hayward's James Monroe Iglehart won a Tony Award for his portrayal of Genie in 2014. SHN Orpheum Theatre, San Francisco. Shnsf.com.

5 11/17–11/19: THE JOFFREY BALLET

The renowned Chicago-based dance company performs a program of new and recent works, including a Cal Performances co-commission, *Joy*, a fun, free-form exploration of happiness. *Zellerbach Hall*, *Berkeley*, *calperformances.org*.

tip

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF A PLAYBerkeley Repertory Theatre's

pre- and postshow programming is as top-notch as its productions. On Tuesday. Wednesday, and Thursday evenings, and for Sunday matinees, preshow talks cover the playwright's biography and the show's historical context, and postshow discussions let you ask questions of the artists. This will be helpful for the quirky Imaginary Comforts, or The Story of the Ghost of the Dead Rabbit, taking place October 5-November 19. Berkeley, berkeleyrep.org.



Derek Lux

THE CONCORD PUPPETEER AND STAGE ACTOR CREATES ENTERTAINING MUSICALS FOR ALL AGES.

In Alice in Wonderland, the first production by Dlux Puppets, 34-year-old Derek Lux plays no less than seven characters: the White Rabbit, Mad Hatter, Cheshire Cat, Caterpillar, Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum, and an exaggeratedly curvy Queen of Hearts. They're all puppets, of course, and Lux-Dlux's founder and artistic director-designed and constructed them, too.

"Puppet building is a solitary thing," says Lux at his workshop, in the backyard of his Concord home. "I'm out here by myself, crafting and stitching, wearing a respirator and using blowtorches, and getting dirty and getting cuts. ... Sometimes I think, *I'm a performer! What am I doing?*"

The two and a half years of preparation paid off when *Alice in Wonderland* debuted in May at Walnut Creek's Lesher Center for the Arts, selling out every performance. Now, it is touring other East Bay venues, including Pleasanton's Firehouse Arts Center this month.

Lux, a lifelong performer, became interested in puppetry several years ago as a creative outlet between auditions and studied under a former Muppeteer. He performs alongside his wife, Lauren, who portrays Alice and is also Dlux's educational director. A second-grade teacher by day, Lauren helped put together performance activity kits with literature- and STEM-focused challenges for kids to take home or use in the classroom.

The couple have both worked for *Beach Blanket Babylon*, where Lux is a principal performer. This explains his ease with *Alice*'s song parodies—like James Brown's "I Feel Good." Lux is looking ahead to 2018, when Dlux will debut its next full-length production: *Peter Pan*. "I already have ideas," he says. "I want to make the crocodile as big as a car. I don't want to repeat myself. I want to push the envelope every time."

October 20–21, Firehouse Arts Center, Pleasanton, dluxpuppets.com.

popular music & comedy

bv Colin Bear

tip

HOW TO SCORE A CONCERT POSTER

Made famous by the psychedelic designs that promoted counterculture trailblazers such as the Grateful Dead and Janis Joplin in the 1960s, The Fillmore's concert posters are still distributed to fans after some shows. Catch Sheryl Crow on October 3. San Francisco, the fillmore.com.



Venue We 🖤

Orinda Theatre

The art deco Orinda Theatre is well known for playing current and classic films. But did you know it hosts stand-up comedy, too? On October 12, catch Walnut Creek native Jeff Richards, one of the first people to be cast on both Saturday Night Live and MADtv. Orinda, lamorindatheatres.com.



EVENTS NOT TO MISS

10/5: JANET JACKSON

After postponing her world tour to have a baby, the pop icon is back, touring in support of her 2015 release, *Unbreakable*, with some '80s and '90s favorites in the set, too—we hope! *Concord Pavilion, Concord, livenation.com*.

2 10/19: ALISON KRAUSS AND DAVID GRAY

Alison Krauss—the most awarded female artist in Grammy history—performs with U.K. singer-songwriter David Gray. Spread a blanket on the grass, and take in two of folk rock's finest. Greek Theatre, Berkeley, thegreekberkeley.com.



10/26-10/29: CHRIS ROCK

The comedy legend and movie star headlines four nights in the East Bay, with all-new material for his Total Blackout Tour.

Paramount Theatre, Oakland, paramounttheatre.com.



11/3: OK GO

If the treadmill-dancing, paint-blasting, zero-gravity viral music videos are any indication of an OK Go live show, you won't want to miss the rock band's Tri-Valley gig. Bankhead Theater, Livermore, Ivpac.org.

6 11/14: KATY PERRY

With a recent switch up of her image and musical style, pop star Katy Perry is sure to put on a radical show that will still have audience members dancing out of their seats. SAP Center, San Jose, sapcenter.com.



meet

D'Arcy Carden

THE DANVILLE NATIVE IS MAKING HER MARK ON NBC'S THE GOOD PLACE.

Ever wonder what it feels like to be iPhone's Siri or Amazon Echo's Alexa? Danville-raised actress D'Arcy Carden says it's not an easy existence. She plays Janet, a programmed robotic woman who helps people in the afterlife on the hit NBC series The Good Place.

"Janet is one of the most difficult acting jobs I've had," says the 37-year-old. "She's not exactly a robot yet not a human. She's this nonjudgmental, positive being."

Janet may be difficult to play, but she has taught Carden to be more empathetic toward electronic devices. Carden says, "I was at a party recently, and the host of the party yelled, 'Alexa, play music!' I found myself feeling badly because Alexa was getting yelled at. Then I realized, 'You only feel like that because of Janet."

Carden describes her gig on The Good Place as a "dream come true." She learns all she can from costar Ted Danson, the veteran of hit comedies such as Cheers and Curb Your Enthusiasm. Carden says, "He's always smiling and saying, 'Can you believe this is our job?' "

Carden has been carving out quite a niche in television comedy lately. In addition to The Good Place, she's had a recurring part on the acclaimed Comedy Central series Broad City and appeared on an episode of HBO's Veep last season. She also has well-known comedy friends on both coasts thanks to her decade of work in the Upright Citizens Brigade Theatre, the improv company founded by Amy Poehler and several others.

But Carden says her earliest comedy lessons came from friends and family in the East Bay. "My best friend, Lindsay, is the funniest person in the world," says Carden. "When we were growing up, she would say something hilarious quietly, and I would just repeat it louder. People would respond, 'D'Arcy, you're so funny!' '

Season two of The Good Place airs Wednesday nights on *NBC*; *nbc.com/the-good-place*. **–P.C**.

tip

HOW TO SCORE CHEAP MOVIE TICKETS

A movie date can cost upward of \$28, and that doesn't even include candy. Consider a midweek rendezvous at a Cinema West theater on \$5 Tuesdays, so you and your companion can see East Bay native Tom Hanks' The Post, out in December, for a mere \$10. Contra Costa Stadium Cinemas (Martinez) and Livermore 13 Cinemas, cinemawest.com. -L.J.

Venue We 🖤

Alamo Drafthouse Cinema

Founded by Berkeley-born Tim League, Alamo Drafthouse Cinema offers order-at-yourseat eats (prosciutto and fig pizza, boozy milkshakes) and themed series, such as Girlie Night for slumber-party movies and cocktails. San Francisco, drafthouse.com/sf. -L.J.



EVENTS NOT TO MISS

10/1: THE LAST MAN **ON EARTH**

Created by and starring Lafayette native Will Forte, who plays the insufferable Phil Tandy Miller, FOX's post-apocalyptic comedy returns for a fourth season of silly antics and truly shocking twists. fox. com/the-last-manon-earth



2 10/7: MATT **GROENING AND** LYNDA BARRY

The Simpsons creator Matt Groening shares the stage with his "biggest inspiration" and lifelong friend, Lynda Barry, creator of Ernie Pook's Comeek. Thev'll talk creativity and friendship, followed by an audience Q&A. Zellerbach Hall, Berkeley, calperformances.org.

€ 10/31: DRACULA

This Halloween, watch the classic 1931 horror film starring Bela Lugosi with live musical accompaniment Bay Area-based Kronos Quartet plays with Philip Glass, who wrote the score for the film's 1999 home video release. Paramount Theatre, Oakland, paramount theatre.com.

4 11/8-11/12: NAPA VALLEY FILM FESTIVAL

More than 100 new, independent films are screened at this Wine Country fest, which also highlights prominent actors and other industry notables for tributes and Q&As. Various venues, Napa, nvff.org.



6 11/17: WONDER

Following his Tony Award win for Hamilton, Oakland-raised Daveed Diggs stars in his first film-alongside Julia Roberts. Wonder is about a young boy struggling to overcome a facial abnormality, and Diggs plays his English teacher. Theaters everywhere, wonder.movie. -L.J.

DIABLO 49

classical music & opera meet

by Sue Gilmore



1 9/30-10/8: **DON PASQUALE**

A silly old fool marries a scheming young woman, and all sorts of aggravation ensue in Gaetano Donizetti's frothy comic opera, performed by Livermore Valley Opera. Bankhead Theater, Livermore, livermorevalleyopera.com.

2 10/22: FRANC D'AMBROSIO'S **BROADWAY**

Best known for his long run as the Phantom in The Phantom of the Opera, D'Ambrosio belts out hits from the Great White Way and shares stories of his stage career. Firehouse Arts Center, Pleasanton, firehousearts.org.

11/17: OAKLAND SYMPHONY

Conductor Michael Morgan and the orchestra showcase Love and Loss, performing Mozart's Symphony No. 40 and Jonah M. Gallagher's Vocare-plus Rossini's Stabat Mater with the Oakland Symphony Chorus. Paramount Theatre, Oakland, oaklandsymphony.org.



12/10: OAKLAND-EAST BAY GAY MEN'S CHORUS

With 50 singers hailing from around the Bay Area, this chorus comes to Berkeley's "home of traditional music" for one of its performances, featuring popular and classical music. Freight and Salvage Coffeehouse, Berkeley, oebgmc.org.

5 12/17: LOWELL TRIO

Cellist Fmil Miland and oboist Janet Popesco Archibald-both musicians of the San Francisco Opera Orchestra—along with pianist Margaret Wong Fondbertasse, return to the venue that helped launch their ensemble 10 years ago. Armando's, Martinez, armandosmartinez.com.

Pamela Freund-Striplen

THE LAFAYETTE RESIDENT AND HER GOLD COAST CHAMBER PLAYERS MAKE CLASSICAL MUSIC APPROACHABLE.

Once upon a time, a fresh-faced viola player knocked on the doors of mansions along Alameda's Gold Coast neighborhood, begging for a venue for her fledgling chamber group. The players landed the Garratt Mansion, whose owner thought they were a great way to advertise the then-B&B.

Fast forward three decades, and go-getter Pamela Freund-Striplen and her Gold Coast Chamber Players are now happily ensconced in the Lafayette Library Community Hall, where the excellent acoustics complement the artists who come from all over the world to make music with the ensemble.

Freund-Striplen, who is 62 and lives in Lafayette, has five programs lined up this season. Each one sends a strong message, a Gold Coast signature. "I like thematic programming where there is a statement being made, where some story is being told, where the audience can relate to it even if they don't have any background in music," says Freund-Striplen.

In the past, Gold Coast has explored Czech composer Antonín Dvořák's love affair with American folk music, and has invited America's Got Talent competitor Lawrence Beamen to sing the booming "Ol' Man River" that won him acclaim on the show. Last season, the group used a narrator to weave together stories and selections of music from 1,000 years of female composers-



from 11th century nun Hildegard von Bingen to 2010 Pulitzer Prize winner Jennifer Higdon.

Gold Coast's October show, entitled Wayfarers, presents Gustav Mahler's Songs of a Wayfarer scaled down from orchestra for the Alexander String Ouartet and mezzo-soprano Kindra

Scharich, for a more intimate experience.

Freund-Striplen says storytelling in the programming keeps her subscribers renewing and the curious yet hesitant coming: "People who are chamber music phobic—if they can come once, they're no longer afraid because we give them a real way in."

October 28, Lafayette Library Community Hall, Lafayette, gcplayers.org.

Venue We 🖤

Zellerbach Hall

Igor Stravinsky heard his own music performed at Zellerbach Hall in 1968, its first year of operation. Almost 50 years later, the UC Berkeley theater is still the go-to venue for orchestral events, including the Korean National Gugak Center Creative Traditional Orchestra on October 28. The acoustics improved with the installation of the first Meyer Sound Constellation system in 2006. And hungry patrons got an upgrade, too, when Café Zellerbach opened upstairs a few years later. Berkeley, calperformances.org.

tip

HOW TO PREVIEW A CONCERT

Before attending the Califor nia Symphony, get familiar with the music. Conductor Donato Cabrera creates a Spotify playlist and shares it on the symphony's website before the show. Up next is A Lemony Snicket Holiday, with an audience sing-along of holiday classics, taking place on December 23. Lesher Center for the Arts, Walnut Creek, california symphony.org.

The Korean National Gugak **Center Creative Traditional** Orchestra performs Saturdav. October 28, at Zellerbach Hall.









EVENTS NOT TO MISS

0 9/17-2/13: MUSEUM OF ICE CREAM

Following sold-out runs in New York and Los Angeles, this Instagram-worthy pop-up art installation brings its colorful pool of sprinkles and ice-cream-themed experiences to the Bay Area. 1 Grant Ave., San Francisco, museumoficecream.com.

2 9/24–12/8: ABOUT ABSTRACTION

Bedford Gallery explores the power of women in politics and the arts by highlighting 16 Bay Area female painters—both established and emerging—who work in abstract art. Bedford Gallery, Walnut Creek, bedford gallery.org.



€ 10/12: ALICE WATERS

Hear the Chez Panisse founder and culinary icon discuss her new memoir, *Coming to My Senses. Nourse Theater, San Francisco, booksinc.net.*

meet

Andy Weir

THE MARTIAN AUTHOR AND LIVERMORE NATIVE DISHES ON HIS NEXT SCI-FI NOVEL.

"Yes, I was very nervous about writing a convincing female lead. I'm not, you know, a woman," offers author Andy Weir, before he's asked about the protagonist of his novel *Artemis*, out November 14. Set in the moon's first city, Artemis, the tale is told

from the perspective of Jasmine Bashara, known as "Jazz," a small-time criminal who gets in way over her head.

But Jazz wasn't always the lead. She was a minor character in the first draft of another story, then a secondary character in the next iteration. "I realized the more time I spent on Jazz, the more enjoyable the story seemed. So, why not make the book about her?" says the 45-year-old Weir.

The creative fits and starts are understandable, considering *Artemis* is the **continued on page 126**



HOW TO SCORE HALF-PRICE MUSEUM

When the sun goes down, the deals heat up at Oakland Museum of California. At Friday Nights @ OMCA, from 5 to 10 p.m., admission is half off for adults and free for ages 18 and under. Check out *Nature's Gift*, a light-filled installation that takes

you through a rainbow into another world (October 7-January 21). Then, enjoy Off the Grid food trucks, live music, dance lessons, art workshops, and a handcraft marketplace. Oakland, museumca.org.

10/14-1/28: *KLIMT AND RODIN* In this exhibit, the

Arts Benicia.

○ 10/14-11/19:BAY AREA CLAYCurated by ceramicist and public

art sculptor Lisa Reinertson, this

exhibit explores how art can be

used as a "powerful weapon for

human spirit and social criticism.

change," expressing both the

Legion of Honor celebrates sculptor Auguste Rodin and painter Gustav Klimt's work and examines their impact on the art world. Legion of Honor, San Francisco, legionofhonor.famsf.org.

Auguste Rodin, Pierre de Wiessant, bronze, 1886



Rakestraw Books

Danville's independent bookstore is much more than a shop. Owner Michael Barnard's literary passion spills into the events he hosts, from intimate author readings in the store to sold-out theater-venue conversations. Pulitzer Prize winner Jennifer Egan reads from her new book, Manhattan Beach, on October 17. Danville, rakestrawbooks.com.







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much-anticipated follow-up to Weir's wildly successful debut, The Martian. In 2011, Weir was working as a Silicon Valley software engineer and writing fan fiction, web comics, and short stories on the side. The Martian, about a NASA astronaut left behind on Mars, was originally released one chapter at a time on his website and then self-published in its entirety for Amazon Kindle, at the request of his readers. That caught the attention of book publishers, and The Martian was rereleased in 2014, debuting on the New York Times Best-Seller list and becoming an Oscarnominated film starring Matt Damon.

"Mark Watney [of The Martian] is the idealized me-all the aspects of my personality that I like and none of the aspects that I don't like," says Weir. "Jazz is a little more of the real me. I'm not as morally flexible, but she has some of my shady thoughts."

Weir grew up in Livermore, the only child in a family of scientists; his dad and stepmom worked at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. At 15. Weir was splitting his days between morning classes at Livermore High and an afternoon programming job at Sandia National Laboratories. In his spare time, he devoured science-fiction novels.

"My dad had this inexhaustible supply of paperbacks from his childhood, so I was reading baby boomer sci-fi," says Weir. He cites Robert A. Heinlein, Arthur C. Clarke, and Isaac Asimov as the biggest influences on his work.

These days, Weir is taking a short writing break. If Artemis is well-received, he hopes to develop it into a series akin to Terry Pratchett's Discworld, with multiple stories about numerous characters living in the same moon city setting.

"Science fiction lately has turned into this formula: a dystopian future and some teenage rebels," he says. "I feel like the good, old-fashioned sci-fi about spaceships and planets has disappeared. Most of those books from the '50s and '60s-they weren't preaching anything. They're like, 'Hey, we're having an adventure on Mars!' They're not like. 'Let's talk about the wealth divide.' That shit's boring. I live in that world. I want to escape to one that's more fun."

Read chapter one of Artemis, and catch Weir at Kepler's Books in Menlo Park on November 20; and yweir author.com.