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J. Paul Getty Trust

Catch the Kipper Kids video at the Getty Center.

Yogurt has more culture? Puh-lease. L.A. has a vivid art scene. Check it out this weekend.

By Jessica Gelt, Times Staff Writer
April 10, 2008

It's tedious being the entertainment capital of the world. "The Hills" might be L.A.'s most visible cultural export today, but it misrepresents us. (OK, not all of us.) In the last 20 years, Southern California has cultivated a supremely vibrant art scene.

To celebrate, more than 30 museums, galleries, nonprofit spaces, retailers and other venues are banding together for Los Angeles Art Weekend, a sort of giant art walk across the city (with stops in Valencia and Newport Beach too). Produced by ForYourArt, a self-proclaimed "meta-curator" that publishes a quarterly map and cultural guide to the L.A. scene, and the New York-based art production firm Black Frame, Art Weekend is one of the more ambitious attempts to spotlight visual art, as well as architecture, performing arts, music, cinema and more. Says ForYourArt founder Bettina Korek, "The idea is to bring art to the public and to draw attention to the incredible depth of L.A.'s cultural landscape."

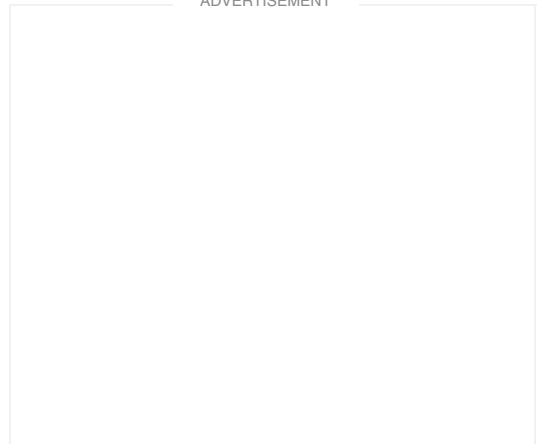
That landscape is dotted with a number of achievements in the last few years: With the opening of the Broad Contemporary Art Museum, Culver City's emergence as a center of gravity for the modern set and downtown's thriving Gallery Row, the synergy between producers, purveyors and consumers of art has never been stronger.

The hope of the four-day Art Weekend is that once participants get a taste of what's out there, they'll develop an insatiable desire for more. The following tour of some of the event's offerings will help whet your appetite.

A PICTURESQUE THURSDAY

Decision-making gets painful as three concurrent events vie for your attention. The first is called

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"An Evening With Albert Maysles" at the [Hammer Museum](#). The "direct cinema" pioneer of "Gimme Shelter" and "Grey Gardens" fame will screen his filmed portraits of Orson Welles, Truman Capote, Marlon Brando and others. He'll also be signing copies of his book of photography called "A Maysles Scrapbook."

"People know me for my cinematography," says Maysles, who is working on a film about Rufus Wainwright. "But I happened to look in some old boxes and I discovered that I had a lot of photos that I took in Turkey and Russia in the '50s, and that's the book."

7 p.m., free, seating first come first served. 10899 Wilshire Blvd., Westwood. (310) 206-3456, www.hammer.ucla.edu

Occupying the same time slot is the [Italian Cultural Institute's](#) opening of a traveling exhibit of the work of Milanese designer **Enzo Mari**. Institute director Francesca Valente, who organized the show, says that Mari's importance is due to the expert way he melds "intellectual elegance to the utility of each object he has created." Mari will be there to answer questions and receive a lifetime achievement award from the institute.

"There are over 60 objects," Valente says. "Chairs, tables, wastepaper baskets, things nobody notices that, in his hands, become works of art."

7 to 9 p.m., free. 1023 Hilgard Ave., Westwood. (310) 443-3250, www.iiclosangeles.esteri.it

Lastly, photographer **Catherine Opie** will open an exhibition of new photographs at [Regen Projects](#) II. The photos of high school football players, which Opie refers to as "football landscapes," were taken in Alaska, Louisiana, San Diego and L.A.

"Football is one of the ways we perceive the idea of the American landscape and identity," says Opie, who has spent much of her career documenting the subtleties of everyday life. Twenty-four portraits and 12 large landscapes will be on view.

6 to 8 p.m., free. 9016 Santa Monica Blvd., L.A. (310) 276-5424, regenprojects.com

For a dose of urban heat, head to the **Downtown Art Walk**. Art walk founder Bert Green of Bert Green Fine Art says that nearly four years after its inception, the monthly walk has grown from eight galleries and 100 visitors to 35 galleries and between 2,000 and 3,000 visitors. Green says that kind of growth is reflective of the fertile ground artists have found in L.A.

"Art Weekend is perfect for bringing together what has been happening organically in L.A. for the past 10 years," Green says. "If you looked at L.A. 20 years ago and then looked at it again today, you wouldn't even recognize it. Suddenly L.A. has become this massive cultural scene."

12 to 9 p.m., free. Downtown L.A. downtownartwalk.com

FRIDAY, WE'RE IN LOVE

Art is popping up everywhere, and nowhere more literally than at the first "pop-up storefront" of New York's lauded gallery [Storefront for Art and Architecture](#). Located in the old Paperchase Printing pressroom on Sunset Boulevard, the Storefront's inaugural L.A. exhibit will be "CCCCP: Cosmic Communist Constructions Photographed," featuring French lensman Frédéric Chaubin's futuristic photos of fantastical structures built during the last two decades of the Cold War.

Storefront director Joseph Grima says that L.A. is "steeped in architectural culture" and that "being in the city I get the feeling that people aren't aware of how rich their own culture is. They're modest in that way."



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