

The Enigma OF EXISTENCE

*Turn your world
upside down
by engaging with
art, books, film
and music*

WORDS
CYNTHIA MARTENS



**STRANGER THINGS:
THE FIRST SHADOW**
Phoenix Theatre
Charing Cross Road,
London, UK
thephoenixtheatre.co.uk
Through June 30

PHOTOS: MANUEL HARLAN, SABINA SARNITZ

As sophisticated algorithms feed us news and imagery that confirm our biases, it's gotten harder to keep a fresh perspective. News of declining enrollment in liberal arts courses at American colleges and universities – traditionally centered on fostering inquiry – comes as the need for critical thinking is greater than ever.

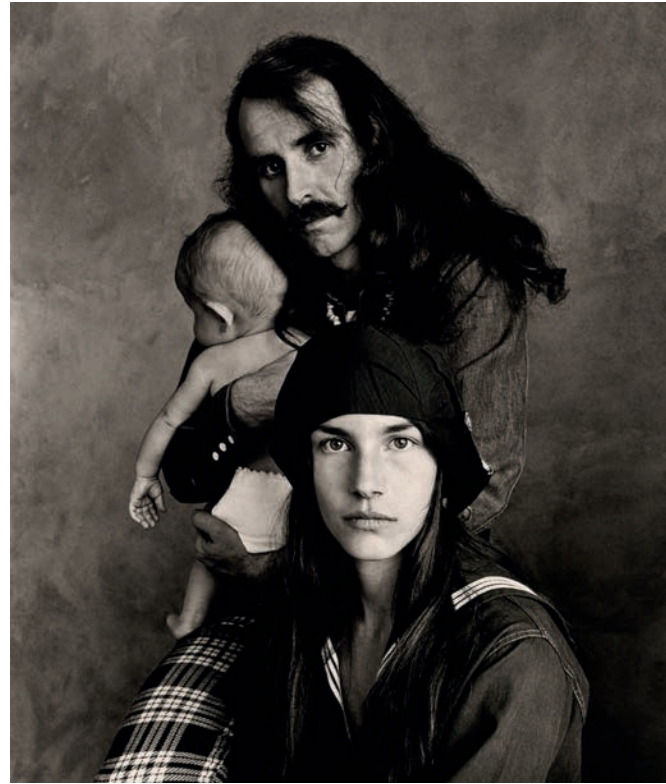
All the more reason to celebrate the arts: the visual, musical, theatrical and literary works that allow us, individually and collectively, to stop, observe, listen, think and feel. This spring, an array of fantastical exhibitions, films, dance concerts and books promise to twist our sense of space and help us lose our bearings. Here, we present just a few.

When Luna Luna, the world's first amusement park dedicated to art, first opened in Hamburg, Germany, in 1987, the fairground featured attractions such as a painted carousel by Keith Haring; *Dalídom*, a mirrored, geodesic

**LUNA LUNA:
FORGOTTEN
FANTASY**
1601 East 6th St,
Los Angeles, CA
lunaluna.com
Through Spring 2024

IRVING PENN
De Young
Golden Gate Park,
50 Hagiwara Tea
Garden Drive San
Francisco, CA
www.famsf.org
March 16 – July 21

Right: *Hippie
Family (Kelley)*, San
Francisco, 1967.



UPSIDE DOWN
PH21 Photography
Gallery
52 Ráday St., Budapest,
Hungary
ph21gallery.com
February 10 – March 5

Left: Anne Tonion
(Australia), *Ostensible*,
2023

dome by Salvador Dalí; a wooden Ferris wheel by Jean-Michel Basquiat; and a glass labyrinth by Roy Lichtenstein. Through this spring, visitors can rediscover these and more whimsical treasures at “Luna Luna: Forgotten Fantasy,” held at a 60,000-square-foot warehouse exhibition space in Los Angeles. The original archway and Luna Luna sign – and lightbulbs! – by Sonia Delaunay connect two rooms filled with works guaranteed to disorient and inspire. Music is part of the experience, with Gregorian chants by Blue Chip Orchestra, compositions by Philip Glass and Miles Davis tunes echoing at various intervals. Daniel Spoerri’s *Crap Chancellery*, Rebecca Horn’s *Love Thermometer* and André Heller’s *Wedding Chapel*, as well as works by Jim Whiting, Joseph Beuys and Monika GilSing, round out the space.

In Japan, the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum is hosting a solo exhibition – *Metaphysical Journey of Giorgio De Chirico* – displaying over 80 of the Italian artist and writer’s most celebrated works. “One must picture everything in the world as an enigma, not only the great questions one has always asked oneself, why was the world created, why we are born, live and die, for after all, as I have said, perhaps there is no reason in all of this. But rather to understand the enigma of things generally considered insignificant,” De Chirico once mused. In Tokyo, visitors can contemplate

his “metaphysical paintings,” which captured the enigma of existence through puzzling landscapes.

Who said cinema is dead? Alice Rohrwacher’s *La Chimera*, starring Josh O’Connor and Isabella Rossellini, is set for release in American theaters on March 29, having garnered positive reviews in Cannes last year. Set in the director’s native Tuscany in the 1980s, it tells the story of a band of robbers breaking into ancient Etruscan tombs. Rohrwacher, whose films often play with magical realism, told *The Hollywood Reporter* that she cast an English speaker in the lead because “Being able to look with the eyes of a foreigner is maybe the best way to see ourselves.”

Some people raid tombs for the gold; others frequent cemeteries for more carnal reasons. Starting March 12, readers can dive into a rediscovered work by Gabriel García Márquez, the master of magical realism. Set in the Caribbean, “Until August” tells the sale of a married woman who takes a new lover with every visit to her mother’s grave. Marquez, who died in 2014, reportedly did not want this – his final book – to be published, perhaps because he wrote it while experiencing dementia. But a decade after the Colombian author’s death, his sons decided to go ahead,

PHOTOS: IRVING PENN, HIPPIE FAMILY (KELLEY), SAN FRANCISCO, 1967. PLATINUM-PALLADIUM PRINT, 16 5/8 x 14 3/16 IN. (42.2 x 36 CM). THE IRVING PENN FOUNDATION. © THE IRVING PENN FOUNDATION. © VICTORIA GABOUN

**CULTURAL OLYMPIAD
AT THE MUSÉE
D’ORSAY**

Esplanade Valéry Giscard
d’Estaing, Paris, France
www.musee-orsay.fr

- The Musée d’Orsay has invited a motley crew of dancers to perform surrounded by art
- Ensemble Les Apaches!**
February 6 – 7
- Running Josepha Madoki**
April 28
- Mourad Merzouki**
June 8 – 9





METAPHYSICAL JOURNEY OF GIORGIO DE CHIRICO
 Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
 8-36 Uenokoen, Taito City, Tokyo, Japan
 dechirico.exhibit.jp
 April 27 – August 29

Left: *Return of Odysseus*, 1968,

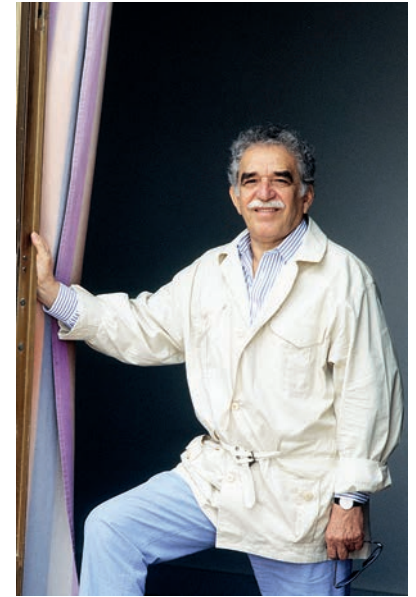
spurred, they said, by a feeling that the work was “the result of our father’s last effort to continue creating against all odds.”

Budapest – historically, a nineteenth-century amalgamation of towns Buda, Obuda and Pest – is a major creative hub in central Europe. Make an appointment at the contemporary PH21 gallery in the Hungarian capital, steps from the Danube River, and check out “Upside down,” a photography exhibit showcasing images the wrong side up. The gallery regularly invites photographers to submit works to open calls, and this time, the curator’s choice is “Inverted Thrills” by Anda Marcu, a pigmented giclée showing the ghostly green outline of an amusement park.

In London’s West End, meanwhile, audiences can travel back to 1959 – “before the world turned upside down,”

to be precise – with the cast of “Stranger Things: The First Shadow,” a play by Kate Trefry, the Duffer Brothers and Jack Thorne, showing at the Phoenix Theatre. Featuring many of the characters from the hit Netflix horror series and, we’re told, creepy special effects, the show promises to keep the adrenaline flowing.

Speaking of time travel, San Francisco’s De Young invites visitors to immerse themselves in the Summer of Love. The museum is hosting an exhibition this spring of 197 works by Irving Penn, the prolific artist and photographer best loved for his arresting fashion shots and portraiture. In 1967, Penn turned his lens on California counterculture, capturing hippies and Hells Angels, and some big-name musicians, along the way. The collection also includes portraits of stars such as Audrey Hepburn, Gianni Versace and Truman Capote.



UNTIL AUGUST

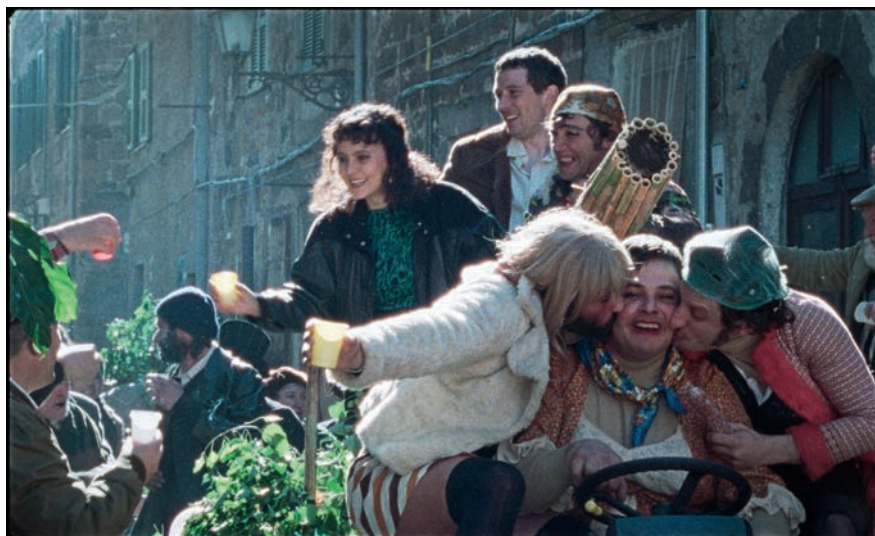
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The Summer Olympics wouldn’t be a French affair without a side of arts and culture. In the lead-up to the big Paris event, cities throughout France are participating in what the government has dubbed the “Cultural Olympiad” – a medley of artistic events, parades, workshops and more “at the crossroads between art, sport and the Olympic and Paralympic values.” For its part, the Musée d’Orsay is welcoming a motley crew of dancers to perform surrounded by art. On February 6 and 7, Ensemble Les Apaches!, a freerunning troupe led by director Julien Masmondet, invited newbies to join them on a liberating musical trek through the museum. On April 28, dancer and choreographer Josepha Madoki takes center stage for a waacking celebration in the museum’s grand ballroom. For the uninitiated, “waacking” is a disco-era form of street dance popularized in West Coast gay nightclubs – a close cousin of the NYC-born “voguing.” And on June 8 and 9, hip-hop choreographer Mourad Merzouki and his Compagnie Käfig dance company promise a glittering parade in the museum’s monumental nave. Merzouki, who attended circus school and began his career as an acrobat, frequently stresses the importance of breaking out of one’s comfort zone – a message we fully embrace.

LA CHIMERA
 Directed by Alice Rohrwacher
 In theaters March 29

Right: Film still featuring actors Luca Gargiullo, Melchiorre Pala, Vincenzo Nemolato, Ramona Fiorini, Josh O’Connor and Giuliano Mantovani.



PHOTOS: GIORGIO DE CHIRICO RETURN OF ODYSSEUS, 1968. OIL ON CANVAS. FONDAZIONE GIORGIO E ISA DE CHIRICO, ROMA © FONDAZIONE GIORGIO E ISA DE CHIRICO, ROMA © GIORGIO DE CHIRICO. BY SIAE 2024. PHOTO: GAIA SCHIAVINOTTO. COURTESY OF NEON. HULTON ARCHIVE VIA GETTY IMAGES