

The week ahead in L.A. theater, Nov. 19-26: 'Resolving Hedda' and more

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By Matt
Cooper



Tom Ormeny and Kimberly Alexander in a scene from "Resolving Hedda," now playing at the Big Victory Theatre in Burbank. (Tim Sullens)

Capsule reviews are by Philip Brandes (P.B.), F. Kathleen Foley (F.K.F.), Margaret Gray (M.G.), Charles McNulty (C.M.), Daryl H. Miller (D.H.M.) and David C. Nichols (D.C.N.).

Openings

Encuentro de las Américas The festival concludes; schedules at www.thelatc.org. The Los Angeles Theatre Center, 514 S. Spring St., L.A. Ends Sun. Single show, \$44. (866) 811-4111.

First Look Festival Staged reading of Laura Campbell's "Thanksgiving Clog." Open Fist Theatre Company, Atwater Village Theatre, 3269 Casitas Ave., L.A. Sun.-Mon., 8 p.m. \$10 suggested donation. (323) 882-6912.

La Belle, Lost in the World of the Automaton Imago Theatre uses puppetry, animatronics, etc., in a family-friendly reimagining of the classic fairy tale "Beauty and the Beast." Plaza del Sol Performance Hall, Cal State Northridge, 18111 Nordhoff St., Northridge. Sun., 3 p.m. \$33 and up. (818) 677-3000.

Millennium Magic XVIII Magicians from the Magic Castle perform. Theatre West, 3333 Cahuenga Blvd. West, L.A. Sun., 2 p.m. \$20. (818) 761-2203.

Once Upon a Mattress Musical Theatre West offers this staged reading of this classic musical comedy. Beverly O'Neill Theatre, Long Beach Convention Center, 300 E. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach. Sun., 7 p.m. \$27, \$32. (562)

856-1999.

Sibling Revelry Tony nominees and sisters Ann Hampton Callaway and Liz Callaway share the spotlight in this cabaret show. Rubicon Theatre Company, 1006 E. Main St., Ventura. Sun., 2 p.m. \$35-\$55. (805) 667-2900.

A Special Evening of Music and Song Singer Mary Normann and pianist Jim Furnston perform songs by Cole Porter, George Gershwin, et al., in this benefit show; harpist Dorothy Victor also performs. Theatre 40, Reuben Cordova Theatre, 241 S. Moreno Drive, Beverly Hills. Sun., 7 p.m. \$25. (310) 364-3606.

Summer: The Donna Summer Musical New tune-filled bio-drama celebrates the life and times of the Queen of Disco. La Jolla Playhouse, 2910 La Jolla Village Drive, La Jolla. Sun., 7 p.m.; Tue.-Wed., 7:30 p.m.; Thu.-Fri., 8 p.m.; Sat., 2 and 8 p.m.; next Sun., 2 and 7 p.m.; ends Dec. 24. \$58 and up. (858) 550-1010.

Sunday Concert Series Vocalist Adam Turney performs in this cabaret show. Pacific Resident Theatre, 705 Venice Blvd., Venice. Sun., 7 p.m. \$20-\$30; discounts available. (310) 822-8392.

What's Going On Vocalist Dorian Holly pays tribute to R&B singer Marvin Gaye. Nate Holden Performing Arts Center, 4718 W. Washington Blvd., L.A. Sun., 7 p.m. \$40. (323) 964-9766.

Something Rotten! Musical comedy about two brothers in Shakespeare's London who set about staging the very first musical. Ahmanson Theatre, 135 N. Grand Ave., L.A. Tue.-Wed., 8 p.m.; Fri., 2 and 8 p.m.; Sat., 2 and 8 p.m.; next Sun., 1 and 6:30 p.m.; ends Dec. 31. \$30-\$140. (213) 972-4400.

A Charlie Brown Christmas Stage adaptation of the animated 1965 holiday special. Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts, 18000 Park Plaza Drive, Cerritos. Wed., 3 and 7 p.m. \$25-\$45. (562) 916-8500.

A Christmas Carol Dickens' classic holiday fable. Glendale Centre Theatre, 324 N. Orange St., Glendale. Fri., 8 p.m.; Sat., 3 and 8 p.m.; next Sun., 1 p.m.; ends Dec. 24. \$22-\$32. (818) 244-8481.

Yerma in the Desert Urban Theatre Movement co-presents Oliver Mayer's new drama about the private lives of the custodians and public-safety personnel at an elite university. Greenway Court Theatre, 544 N. Fairfax Ave., L.A. Fri., 8 p.m.; Sat., 2 and 8 p.m.; ends Dec. 16. \$15-\$40. (323) 673-0544.

Chico's Angels in Feliz NaviDivas The drag trio returns with an all-new holiday show. Cavern Club Celebrity Theater, Casita Del Campo Restaurant, 1920 Hyperion Ave., Silver Lake. Sat., 2, 8 and 10 p.m.; next Sun., 3, 6 and 8 p.m.; ends Nov. 27. \$25-\$35. www.chicosangles.com

The Eve of Jackie: The Legacy of Jackie Wilson Vocalist Chester Gregory pays tribute to the R&B legend. Nate Holden Performing Arts Center, 4718 W. Washington Blvd., L.A. Sat., 8 p.m. \$35. (323) 964-9766.

The Frog Prince and His Story Time Pals Family-friendly adaptations of classic fairy tales. Archway Studio/Theatre, 10509 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood. Sat., 11 a.m.; next Sun., 2 p.m.; ends Dec. 17. \$15. (818) 980-7529.

Hansel and Gretel Family-friendly rock musical retells the Brothers Grimm's classic fairy tale. Carpenter Performing Arts Center, 6200 E. Atherton St., Long Beach. Sat., 1 and 4 p.m. \$25. (562) 985-7000.

Moonwalker: The Reflection of Michael Tribute show remembers the King of Pop. Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts, 18000 Park Plaza Drive, Cerritos. Sat., 8 p.m. \$40-\$75. (562) 916-8500.

Critics' Choices

Caught A gallery talk by a Chinese dissident artist is the beginning of a plunge down a rabbit hole in this art

installation/theater piece. Christopher Chen's wildly inventive play inspires further creativeness in director Ed Sylvanus Iskandar and L.A. presenters Firefly Theater & Films, VS. Theatre Company and Think Tank Gallery. Ever-shifting frames of reality leave you with more questions than answers, which is good because they're questions about perception and truth. (D.H.M.) Think Tank Gallery, 939 Maple Ave., L.A. Sun., Fri.-next Sun., 7:30 p.m.; ends Dec. 10. \$65-\$80. www.thinktank.gallery.

I Am Not a Comedian... I'm Lenny Bruce In this meticulously researched solo biography tracing the life and prosecution of the groundbreaking early 1960s comic provocateur, actor Ronnie Marmo and director Joe Mantegna offer subsequent generations not only a sense of who Bruce was, but more importantly why he mattered. (P.B.) Theatre 68, 5112 Lankershim Blvd., North Hollywood. Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m.; ends Dec. 31. \$35. (323) 960-5068.

King Charles III British playwright Mike Bartlett's "future history play" (nominated for a Tony Award last year) fills us in on the machinations of the Royal Family after the death of Queen Elizabeth II. Written in a buttery blank verse, the drama is more concerned with the theatrical charade of politics than the gossip that's regularly splashed on the cover of the Daily Mail. Michael Michetti's fine-grained staging doesn't oversell the drama. These larger-than-life figures are intimately approached. And Jim Abele, in one of the finest performances of the year, reveals the inner workings of Charles' conscience, which throws Britain's system of government into crisis. (C.M.) Pasadena Playhouse, 39 S. El Molino Ave., Pasadena. Sun., next Sun., 2 p.m.; Wed., Fri., 8 p.m.; Sat., 2 and 8 p.m.; ends Dec. 3. \$25-\$96. (626) 356-7529.

Mr. Burns, a Post-Electric Play Making spectacular use of Sacred Fools' triple-stage complex, Anne Washburn's dark futurist epic traces three phases in the 70-year postapocalyptic mutation of a pop culture artifact — "The Simpsons" "Cape Feare" episode — from nostalgic amusement to structuring narrative for a rebuilt civilization. (P.B.) Sacred Fools Theatre Company, 1076 Lillian Way, Hollywood. Sun., next Sun., 7 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m.; ends Dec. 9. \$15. (323) 207-5605.

Resolving Hedda Hedda Gabler has a bone to pick with Henrik Ibsen. After 126 years of being backed into a corner and left with suicide as her only freedom, she's had enough. So she's trying to wrest control of "Hedda Gabler" and disrupt its plot. In Jon Klein's boisterous new comedy she is ferociously embodied by Kimberly Alexander. Maria Gobetti nimbly directs. Laughing audiences clearly are on Hedda's side. (D.H.M.) The Big Victory Theatre, 3326 W. Victory Blvd., Burbank. Sun., next Sun., 4 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m.; ends Dec. 3. \$24-\$34. (818) 841-5421.

Rhinoceros With darkly hilarious urgency, this superbly staged and disconcertingly timely revival illuminates playwright Eugene Ionesco's absurdist warning about the seductively corrosive lure of herd mentality and the fragility of civilized norms we take for granted. (P.B.) Pacific Resident Theatre, 703 Venice Blvd., Venice. Ends Sun., 3 p.m. \$25-\$34; discounts available. (310) 822-8392.

Rotterdam A big change can knock any couple out of alignment. For Alice and Fiona, the change goes to the very core of their identities. In her late 20s and several years into the relationship, Fiona reveals that she feels she's a man. With insight and humor, British playwright Jon Brittain charts the pair's journey as they rediscover who they are in this Olivier Award-winning play. Michael A. Shepperd crisply directs a perceptive cast. (D.H.M.) Skylight Theatre, 1816 1/2 N. Vermont Ave., Los Feliz. Sun., next Sun., 2 p.m.; Mon., 8 p.m.; Sat., 8:30 p.m.; ends Dec. 11. \$25-\$41. (866) 811-4111.

The Secret in the Wings Playwright Mary Zimmerman ("Metamorphoses") offers up a richly horrific collection of little-known fairy tales, shuffling the stories so that we are left at the apogee of dread before the action "cuts away" to another story before eventually resuming — an ingenious device that requires a dizzying number of scene shifts and costume changes. Director Joseph V. Calarco handles the production's intricacies with a sure hand, interspersing the general grimness with drollery at welcome intervals, while the seamless Coeurage Theatre ensemble is a dream team so perfectly in tune with one another, they could be a single organism. (F.K.F.) Historic Lankershim Arts Center, 5108 Lankershim Blvd., North Hollywood. Wed., Fri., Sat., 8 p.m.; ends Dec. 16. Pay what you want. (323) 944-2165.

