



ENTERTAINMENT &amp; ARTS

# FRINGE FESTIVAL: ADVENTURESOME SEPTEMBER AGENDA

BY ZAN DUBIN

JUNE 25, 1987 12 AM PT

With its artists performing on roof tops at rush hour, on the beach at sunrise and in a parking lot at midnight, the Fringe Festival/Los Angeles in September will be nothing if not adventuresome.

For example, on opening day (Sept. 4):

--Sandra Tsing Loh will serenade 5 p.m. drivers mushing along the Harbor Freeway, her grand piano placed atop the Martin Cadillac Building downtown.

--Susan Suntree will make her audience participate in a performance art piece as the sun rises over Santa Monica Beach.

--Ten Latino visual artists will light sculpture on fire at midnight at the Self-Help Graphics art gallery in East Los Angeles.

Created as an adjunct to the Los Angeles Festival, which will bring the city troupes from around the globe Sept. 3-27, the Fringe Festival will feature some 175 local arts organizations and individual artists--primarily nonprofit groups and artists presenting roughly 250 events during the monthlong multidiscipline celebration, Aaron Paley, Fringe Festival executive director announced at a downtown news conference Wednesday .

The lineup will feature both well-known groups, such as the Groundlings improvisational theater troupe, and lesser-known ones, such as the Florence Sinay Ballet. Events will be scattered throughout Los Angeles County, at conventional as well as unconventional times and venues, Paley said. Some events may even begin before the Fringe's official Sept. 4 starting date and extend beyond its Oct. 4 closing, he added.

"I am very pleased with the tremendous response we've gotten from artists and organizations," who faced festival entry fees ranging from \$100 to \$250 and who will have to pay their own production costs, Paley told The Times. "It shows that we have struck a nerve and that there's a need for this.

"I'm also happy that 25% of the participants are minorities, and I'm excited about the breadth of the festival. We have events for children and senior citizens, and events taking place everywhere--in the South Bay, in the Valley, in East L.A. We have the chance to reach a really broad section of the community. I also feel very good that we have so many lesser-known grass-roots groups--which is what the Fringe is all about," added Paley, who said Wednesday he had "never been to an arts festival" when he took the job as Fringe director.

While names of most Fringe participants were revealed Wednesday, some of the events (such as music or dance concerts, plays or exhibits) and many of the specifics (dates and times) were not. Further, participation in the Festival is still open, so a complete schedule won't be available until mid-July, Paley said.

However, the current Fringe roster shows a multi-ethnic mix of artists and arts groups, with events planned for parks and parking lots, churches, universities, street corners, on the radio and elsewhere.

Theater dominates the Fringe, with 125 events--three times as many as any other discipline, according to Paley. (See Stage Watch on Page 3.)

“There’s a lot of theater activity going on in this town,” Paley said. “I think its current predominance in the Fringe is an indication of that vitality.”

Among theater groups signed up so far are the Cast Theatre, the Ensemble Studio Theatre, the Back Alley Theatre, the Odyssey Theatre Ensemble, the Exotic Women, the Salle Gascon Fencing Club and Purple Stages: A Celebration of Gay and Lesbian Culture.

About 40 visual arts events are planned. Participating groups include the Museum of African American Art; the Brockman Gallery; USC’s Fisher Gallery; University Art Museum at Cal State Long Beach; Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE), which will present a six late-night performance art series; the Woman’s Building, with its annual post card art exhibit; the California Museum of Science and Industry, with a “Computer and Visual Art” show, and Urban Art Inc., with a downtown walking tour of 25 public artworks.

Musically, about 35 events are planned, including an appearance by Chance, a New-Age quartet; music from Central America by El Rescate; a church organ concert by Michael Sellers; free jazz concerts at CalTech in Pasadena, and performances by the Los Angeles Mozart Orchestra and the USC School of Music, which will present works by Arnold Schoenberg and others.

About 25 dance events are scheduled by such troupes as Sarah Elgart and Company, Karen Goodman Dance Theater, the Collage Dance Theatre and the Amboseli Troupe. The Downtown Dance Studio will present performances by several groups, Paley added. It, like LACE and the Variety Arts Center downtown, and the Lhasa Club and Barnsdall Park in Hollywood, will serve as a “hub” of activity, offering many events by different groups, he said.

However, missing from the dance roster are many prominent local companies, who earlier this year expressed reservations about participating in the Fringe, citing the high

cost of self-production. Some objected to a lack of “quality control” of the festival open entry policy. (Paley said Wednesday that no applicant was turned down).

“The better known dance groups have fixed schedules,” Paley said in response to their absence. “They plan their concerts well in advance; they put on one to two concerts a year, and it takes a lot of planning. I wasn’t encouraging them to change their schedules for the Fringe.”

Among about 30 performance art events planned are works by the East Los Streetscapers, the Circus d’Carlo and Rachel Rosenthal, who will also appear in the Los Angeles Festival.

Also included will be film and video works, literary arts and children’s entertainments as presented by EZTV, Beyond Baroque and the Children’s Museum, respectively. Street shows are promised too.

The Fringe will be launched with “24 Hours of Art/LA” on Sept. 4, which will feature arts activities starting every hour-on-the-hour, Paley said. This event will begin at dawn with a performance by Rhythms of the Village, a traditional African music and dance company, and will continue to dawn the next day with such offerings as the Harbor Freeway piano serenade by Sandra Tsing Loh.

The Fringe, modeled after the Edinburgh Festival of Scotland, will also present works by about 10 groups from outside Los Angeles County, including one from Orange County and some from San Francisco, San Diego, Atlanta and New York.

Fringe ticket prices will average \$8, Paley said, though many events will be free. Sales of tickets will be handled independently by each participant, he said, but information about tickets may also be obtained by calling the Fringe office at (213) 931-1255. The same telephone number may also be used by prospective participants. The sign-up deadline is Tuesday.

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