



Five Shows Not To Miss During PST ART

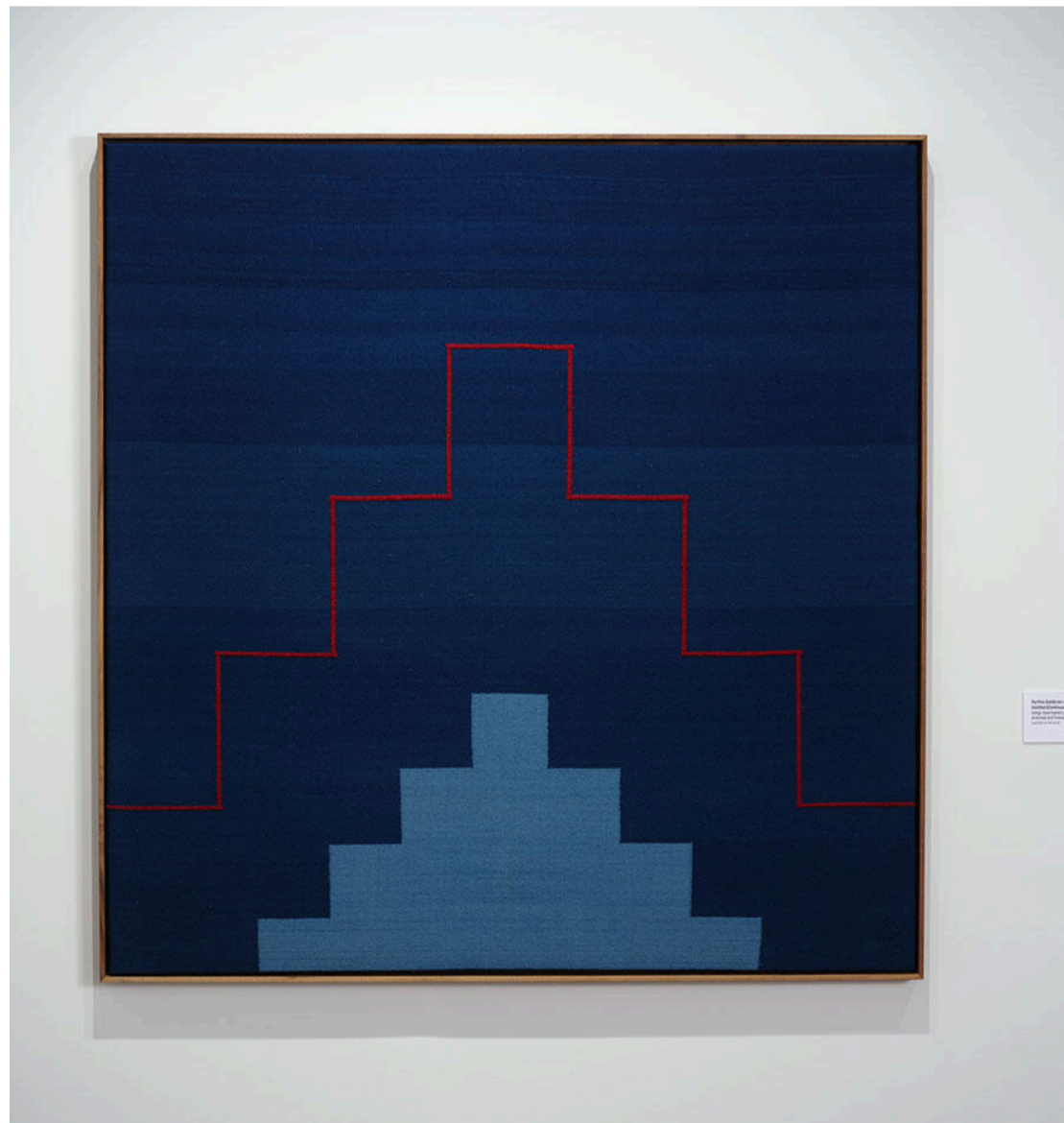
From sci-fi and queer culture at the USC Fisher Museum of Art to Experiments in Art and Technology at The Getty Center, discover the first round of PST openings



BY JONATHAN GRIFFIN IN CRITIC'S GUIDES | 13 SEP 24



[‘Sangre de Nopal / Blood of the Nopal’](#) | The Fowler Museum at UCLA | 21 July 2024–12 January 2025



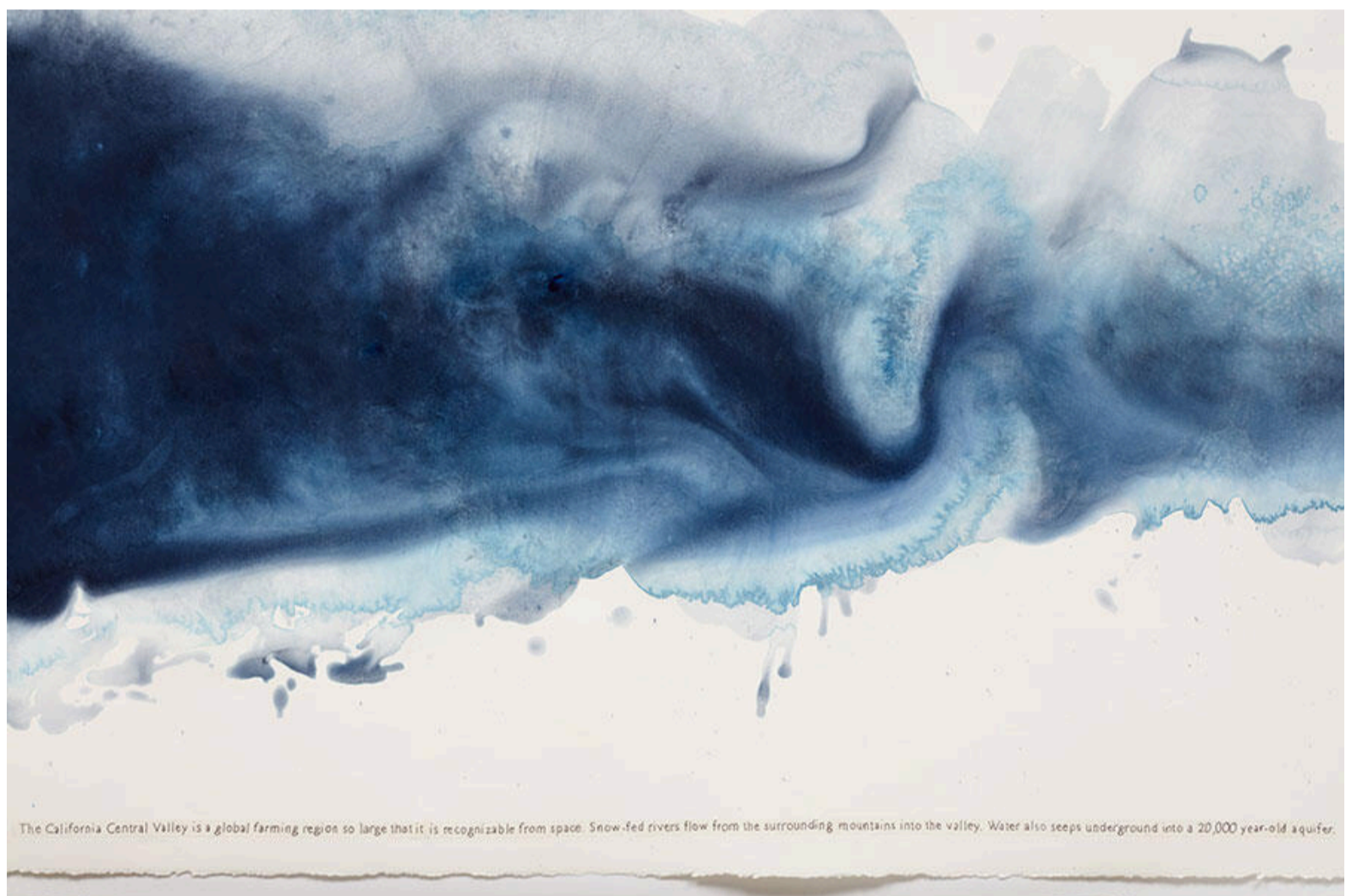
Porfirio Gutiérrez, *Untitled (Continuous Line series)*, 2023, indigo-dyed tapestry with cochineal-embroidered detail, stretched and framed.
Courtesy: the artist and the Fowler Museum at UCLA; photograph: Elon Schoenholz

'Sangre de Nopal / Blood of the Nopal' is effectively several shows nested inside one another. At its core are solo presentations by the fibre artists Tanya Aguiñiga and Porfirio Gutiérrez, both of whom are of Mexican descent and are attentive to Mexican traditional weaving practices and Indigenous ecological knowledge. (The two have previously worked closely together in Oaxaca, Mexico, although only one work presented in this exhibition is identified as collaborative.)

Gutiérrez's weavings, especially his elegant 'Continuous Line' series (2021–ongoing), refer to Modernist painting, as well as the far longer history of Zapotec craftsmanship. Aguiñiga's often knotted works are more sculptural, incorporating found items as with the splendidly monstrous *Somos una tela continua (We are a continuous cloth)* (2023), which integrates stones, wood and metal found in the Los Angeles River.

Around and beside these presentations are additional didactic displays on the use of the cochineal beetle (found on the nopal cactus) to make red dye; cases of tools; an interactive weaving project; and an installation of Mexican textile works, both contemporary and historical.

'From the Ground Up: Nurturing Diversity in Hostile Environments' | Armory Center for the Arts | 9 August 2024 – 23 February 2025



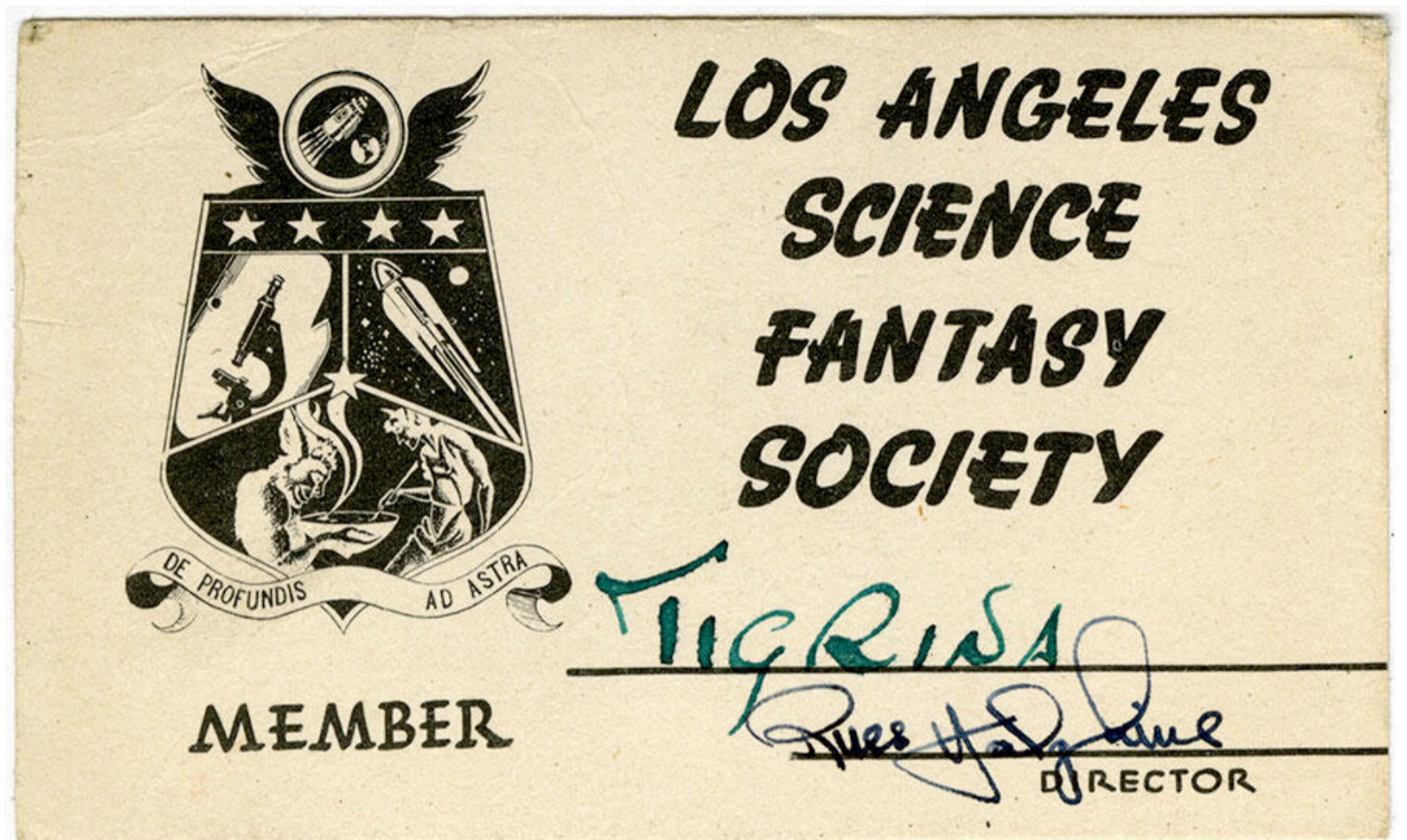
Hillary Mushkin, *The River and the Grid* (detail), 2024, ink, watercolour, graphite, archival inkjet prints and glue on paper; artist's book. Courtesy: the artist and Armory Center for the Arts, Los Angeles; photograph: Evan Walsh

'What can seeds tell us about the future?' asks an introductory wall text in 'From the Ground Up: Nurturing Diversity in Hostile Environments'. Though this exhibition provides no firm answers, the 16 artists and groups whom it highlights, energized by traditional practices and understandings of nature, shine their lights into the great darkness ahead.

Some artists question received notions of technology. The LA-based Wixárika artist Sarah Rosalena combines 3D-printed stoneware vessels with woven reeds and pine needles to make hybrid vessels; Cielo Saucedo's *Visible Vault* (2024) is an entrancing display of crumbling reproductions of Mesoamerican artifacts, 3D-printed in dehydrated masa. Beatriz Cortez's sculpture *Generosity I* (2019), dangling from the ceiling, is based on the form of a Sputnik satellite, but it carries samples of seeds traditionally harvested by Indigenous peoples including corn, beans and amaranth.

While the least successful presentations read as overly informational, the most effective are often the simplest. On the gallery desk is a pot made by the Hopi artist Kyle Kootswatewa; it contains amaranth seeds placed there by the collective Malaqatel Ija, Semillas Viajeras, Seed Travels. Visitors are invited to take a few to plant in their gardens.

'Sci-Fi, Magick, Queer L.A.: Sexual Science and the Imagi-nation' | USC Fisher Museum of Art | 22 August – 23 November



Tigrina's Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society (LASFS) Membership Card, c. 1940s. Courtesy: ONE Archives at the USC Libraries, Los Angeles

'Sci-Fi, Magick, Queer L.A.: Sexual Science and the Imagi-nation' is curated by Los Angeles's ONE Archives at the USC Libraries, purported to be the largest repository for LGBTQ+ materials in the world. The sumptuously designed exhibition admittedly places more emphasis on the queer than the scientific (is sci-fi really science?) but its occasionally anecdotal displays go some way to arguing that, as the exhibition material says, 'science fiction fandom and the occult are integral to a nuanced and complete understanding of early queer history in the United States'.

Suggestive illustrations for 1940s sci-fi fanzines by artists who went on to draw for beefcake pictorials and lesbian zines, and Surrealist art by occultists such as Marjorie Cameron and Renate Druks, contribute to a survey of how queer expression was encoded in fields where creators dared to imagine alternative, more permissive and more enlightened future societies.

'Future Imaginaries: Indigenous Art, Fashion, Technology' | Autry Museum of the American West | 7 September 2024 – 21 June 2026



Wendy Red Star, *Stirs Up the Dust*, 2011. Courtesy: the artist and Autry Museum of the American West, Los Angeles

'Futuristic concepts such as time travel, cosmic beings and ancestral technologies have been present in Indigenous art for centuries,' state the curators of 'Future Imaginaries: Indigenous Art, Fashion, Technology'. This crowded show, which features over 50 works by Indigenous contemporary artists, includes wearable objects as well as photography, sculpture, painting, sound and an immersive digital installation.

Fashion takes centre stage, though: the show includes garments made for the catwalk and art performances, as well as non-wearable pieces such as Jeffrey Gibson's oversized war shirt with the punning title *Tribes File Suit to Protect Bears Ears* (2018), or Rose B. Simpson's imposing ceramic figure, *Ground (Witness)* (2016), dressed in futuristic black leather garb redolent of a character from a post-apocalyptic science fiction film.

There is even a surprising section devoted to artists referencing the *Star Wars* and *Star Trek* franchises, including Marie Watt, whose *Trek (Pleiades)* (2014) is a quilt embroidered with an outline of the Starship Enterprise. Science fiction typically offers a rather retro vision of the future; retro too, is the postmodern strategy adopted by many artists here, of hybridizing ancient and contemporary references.

'Sensing the Future: Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.)' | The Getty Center | 10 September 2024 – 23 February 2025



Robert Breer, *Floats*, 1970, archival inkjet print from negative. Courtesy: The Getty Center, Los Angeles, © Robert Breer/Kate Flax/gb agency, Paris, © J. Paul Getty Trust; photograph: Shunk-Kender

Though some naysayers may doubt the importance of science's contribution to art, this exhibition proposes a compelling historical precedent. In 1966, the artists Robert Rauschenberg and Robert Whitman founded, with engineers Billy Klüver and Fred Waldhauer, a nonprofit organization dedicated to facilitating collaboration between artists, engineers and scientists. Experiments in Art and Technology, or E.A.T., was responsible for radically innovative projects by major artists, the most ambitious being '9 Evenings: Theatre and Engineering' held at the 69th Regiment Armory in New York in 1966 and the 'Pepsi Pavilion' at Expo '70 in Osaka, Japan, in 1970.

An audience of more than 10,000 people reportedly attended '9 Evenings,' witnessing performances by Yvonne Rainer, John Cage, Öyvind Fahlström and others, each artist paired with a 'performance engineer.' The grainy black-and-white documentation that forms the basis of the Getty's exhibition leaves something to be desired; clearly, you really had to be there. The 90-foot inflatable dome of mirrored mylar that formed the Pepsi Cola Pavilion – a truly collaborative venture between around 75 artists and engineers – sounds like an absolute trip.

Main image: Aroussiak Gabrielian, Future Kin (detail), 2024, video still from mixed-media installation, dimensions variable. Courtesy: the artist and Armory Center for the Arts



JONATHAN GRIFFIN

Jonathan Griffin is a writer based in Los Angeles, USA, and a contributing editor of *frieze*.

TAGS

[PST ART](#), [Tanya Aguiñiga](#), [Porfirio Gutiérrez](#), [Fowler Museum at UCLA](#), [Armory Center for the Arts](#), [USC Fisher Museum of Art](#), [Autry Museum of the American West](#), [Experiments in Art and Technology](#), [The Getty Center](#), [Los Angeles](#), [Critics' Guide](#)

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