

# Articles and More

By Brandon Lund

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## A Day of Options near the Coast



The drive to Windy Oaks Estate was lush and green on this day of September 9th, 2020. Heading from the east, the road bends to the south before taking a right turn onto the estate. The dirt road that leads upwards to the estate also winds and sharp turns are guarded by a blind spot mirror. Parking was easy and I was happy to stretch my legs though the heat was elevated. The attendant was friendly and offered seating and a glass, which began the wine tasting.



I tried five wines, four of which were listed, one was complementary. The “2018 Sauvignon Blanc, Barrel Fermented,” along with the other four wines were complex and interesting. I enjoyed myself. I would describe the wines as having a milky texture but with a citrus smell and flavor, which is how I like to drink white wine. I would describe red wines as have the texture of half and half but with a berry smell and flavor.



I walked the vineyard with my partner and we enjoy the hot day surrounded by such ambiance. The winery was fun and I would recommend Windy Oaks Estate to anyone who wanted friendly staff and a tasteful experience trying wine inland from the coast.



While heading home, my partner and I decided to stop and get some fresh fruit and vegetables from an outdoor market in order to think about the coast and the winery as having been well-paired. Like the wine tasting, I took a moment to think about my life and which parts I would remember most due to the choices that I have made recently at day's closure.

## Mere People, While Among Those Who are God-like

By Brandon Lund



As the many interests that can arise in such a large place as Los Angeles do arise, a soon to visit attraction of King Tut was among them. The exhibit was grand and soon eclipsed the smaller event at the time.

King Tut was very interesting and the visit to the California Science Center was rewarding in many ways. Entrance to Exposition Park lies along Figueroa, which makes it less confusing by car, and the event was promoted heavily in the year of 2018.



A tallied entry point was placed before ascending/descending escalators which led to another set of stairs which lead to the third floor. I used the "anytime" entrance line, since I

had arrived at any other time. The line was roped-off in a U-ish shape and entry to the event began at "part 1."



According to the event: Giovanni Belzoni and four other figures were important figures associated with King Tut. Over thirty people watched a movie, while standing, on the history of the excavation and details such as Howard Carter's work in Egyptology on Tutankhamun (King Tut) were mentioned.

The displays were of bronze and wood and historical figures such as Thutmose III were inscribed on objects such as a vase, observed through glass.



Often a single room was filled with people and glass displays. Above the displays, observable descriptions were placed and viewable descriptions were also placed inside displays.



I read these words out loud, while in attendance, from Spell 43 of the Book of the Dead in order to further my understanding of the event: “The head of Osiris shall not be taken from him and my head will not be taken from me.”

Later, I thought on Osiris and the powerful influence that took place behind such an illustrious past; one that could only be formulated in Mesopotamia, now modern day Iraq. Pagan gods once dominated the region

through faith that is credential by a priest or king to their god, which obviously muddies church and state. Power often changed hands through “gods” and the subsequent struggles between man and god-like men such as a Pharaoh who often believed in a pagan god such as Osiris would play out through religion.

Power that is changing hands can be observed in the following passage through the side by side comparison of the pagan god Osiris lying next to a waking “sleeper.” It appears that power is being passed to the god Osiris from the deceased individual so that it can be bestowed on another. A bed of wood with gold leaf was viewable below observable text and the event continued from here. I read the words out loud from Spell 517, Coffin Text: “The sleeper awakes, Osiris—Khentiamentiu awakes here with his ka, he who sleeps on his left side, the sleeper!”

Further along, text reading “Furniture for a Boy King,” could be read above a small chair viewable through glass.



Later, I read out loud, “My name flourishes for me,” from Spell 63A, Book of the Dead. The text

was in the vicinity of a Wood and Ivory Pen case and Cartouche Box (Jewelry Case).

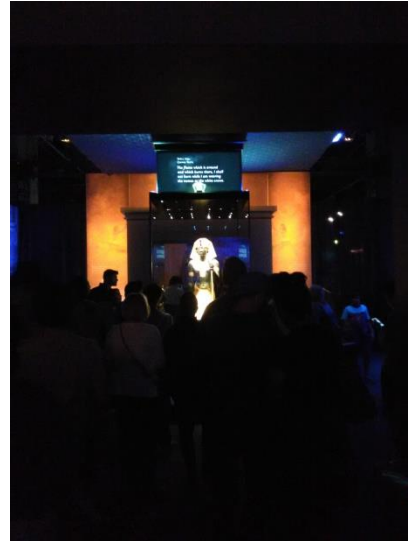


I found Spell 144 later from the Book of the Dead and read out loud the following: "I know you and I know your names."

Then I read out loud the following passage, later on: "You will fare downstream to Busiris. You will fare upstream to Abydos." This passage came from Column V, lines 6 and 7, opening of the Mouth Ceremony. The text was above a viewable wooden model of a boat.



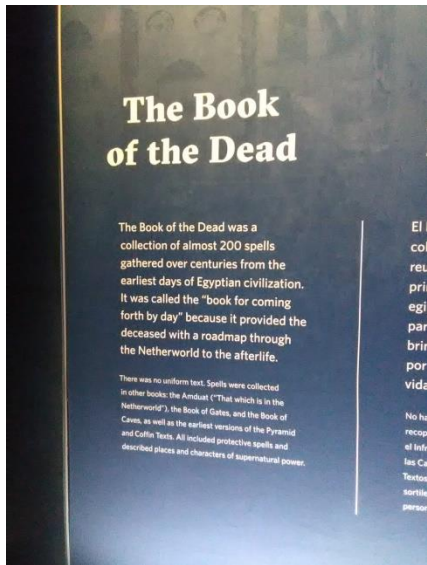
Oftentimes aided by spells from The Book of the Dead, text that was above a viewable "life-size ka," describes Tutankamun's journey through the "Netherworld to his rebirth at dawn."



From text above Shabtis or "small, magical mummified figures," I also read out loud: "I will do it. Here I am!"



I also read out loud, "It is I who hinder the sand from choking the secret chamber, and who repel that one who would repel him with desert flame. I have set aflame the desert, I have caused the path to be mistaken. I am for the protection of the deceased."



*Upon returning once more through the event...*

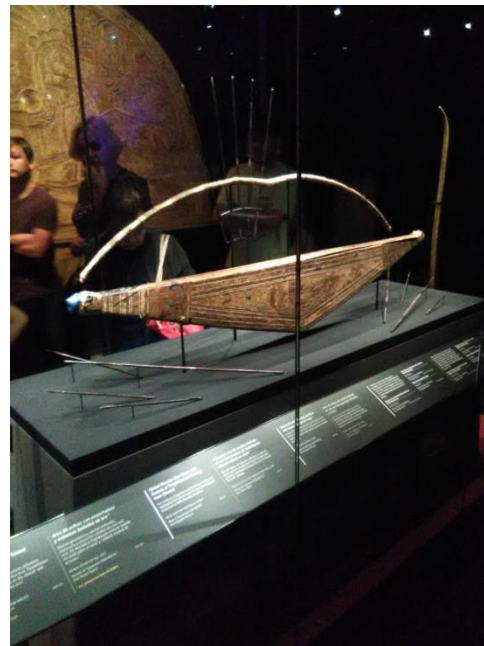
Above a viewable wooden statue that spoke of Herwer, I observed the text: "I am you Son, (Horus the Elder), beloved Horus, I have come to protect my father Osiris from the one who acts against you: I lead him under your sandals." From Spell 151A, Book of the Dead.

To continue on the event, a wooden shield is viewable through glass; observable text above shield describes Tutankhamun's ability to maintain law and order through mastery of lions.

His symbolic importance of the unity of Egypt is readable above a viewable shield of him as a Sphinx trampling Nubian enemies.



From text above a viewable bow with case and arrows describes his tomb as full of hundreds of arrows and 30 bows (It also describes snakes as his enemy in the Netherworld), I read out loud, "I am the one who breaks the fetters, who shoots at underlings." Spell 1141, Coffin Text.

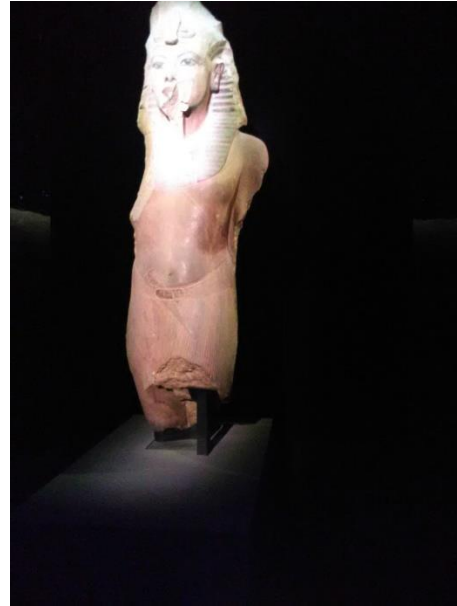


*Part 2, First Floor...*

A timeline and video gallery further explained the event with greater detail. An observable video description was above a viewable Wooden Shrine; I read out loud Spell 1099, Coffin Text, "I am a follower of Re who receives his iron, who replaces the god in the shrines, Horus who ascends to his lord."



Towards the end was roped off a two tier statue; observable text describes a "Colossal Quartzite Statue," which is viewable. The event ultimately ends in the gift shop.





## Events on Broadway That Concluded a Year



Spring Street, between 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> street, was host for attractions and events that wrapped around west towards Koreatown. The presenters, Cic La Via, offered open streets, traffic control, and restrooms, along with street attractions and future interests, on this day, Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017.



Visual displays of math and a Wave Pendulum were demonstrated through theatrics and circus tricks. An advocacy group teaching bike safety to families offered Spanish/English literature that is understood by flipping the

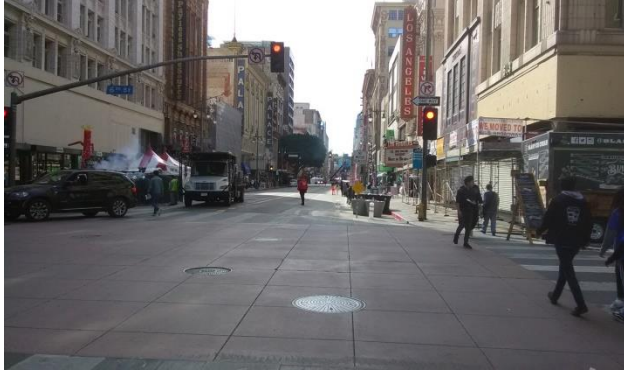
book vertically to read either one or the other's language. They were handing out bike-bells for participation in expressing gratitude against their wall of creative works.



Safety demonstrations for kids that are transitioning into "street safety" awareness were discussed along with "why the rules make sense."



After enjoying the afternoon on Spring Street, I came across Councilmember Jose Huizar's tent. The tent described Jose Huizar through newsletters that were handed out by attendants. "Moving DTLA Forward," was the topic/initiative discussed through face-to-face administration: "Bring Back Broadway," was described through newsletters administered by the booth as having, "attracted more than 75,000 people in 2017." Saturday, Jan 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018 would be a chance to try the event again another year.



When Broadway is barren, it appears drastically different. *A Night on Broadway* was full of attractions that deserved attention from many people. Blockades kept traffic on the streets and out of parking garages. Free standing maps displayed the entire venue, street by street, and brochures were given by official attendants.



Just off "South Broadway," Grand Central Market allowed foot traffic to enter the market, which is centered between Hill & Broadway, 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> street. Six open entrances on Hill St. and five open entrances on Broadway accepted the crowds that were showing. According to the administration of literature, "Councilmember

Huizar is gearing up for the biggest grand finale of all: *Night on Broadway 2018*."



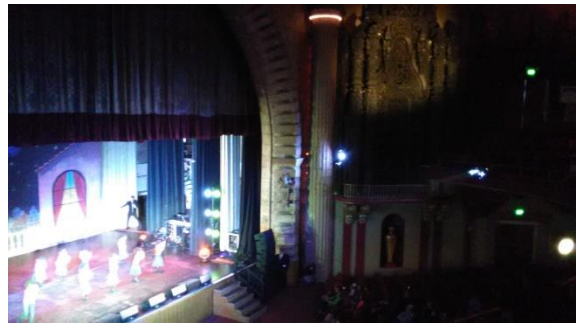
Through comparison to other restaurants, bars, and open courts, I chose a seat in front of a red counter facing west, which wrapped around white pillars. The stool was fixed to the floor and spun in place. White and red neon above the kitchen described the restaurant as a "China Café." I ordered Beef Chow Mein for \$7.75 and ate with chop sticks and then continued to explore.



Heading north, heritage-based plays were being held at the “Million Dollar Theatre,” according to the administration of literature by attendants.



From my seat, ORCH 525, two gold statues, framed and embedded into the wall, could be seen comparatively to the rest of the theatre. The chair was red with wood armrests. The Balcony was shaped in a half-circle with 13 lights along the rim. 14 lanterns, big and small, were visible and accurate according to what could be observed through seating. A Great Chandelier, in what is a circular theatre, is seen clearly from the balcony. Outside, 9 bison heads compared to 8 personas in terms of pleasing effect upon pedestrian traffic.



Between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> street, along Broadway, roller-skating and live rock music played at Joe’s Auto Parks. Distance from the area was provided by a chalk line which separated the arena from 2 bleachers. An electronic scoreboard tallied points from what was call the “Derby Doll Arena,” according to literature

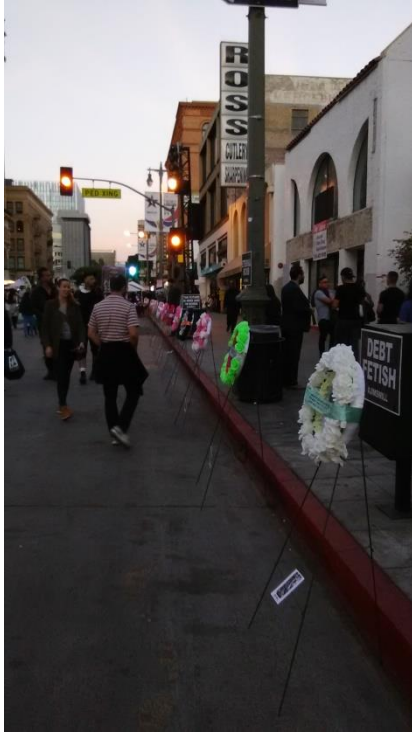
administered to pedestrians by festival attendants.



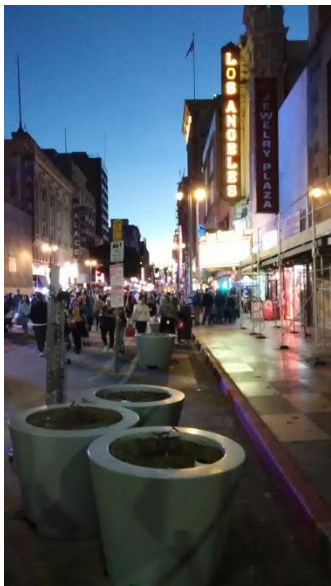
On 1<sup>st</sup> street, between Broadway and Spring Street, a Beer Garden served festival beer which was available for purchase.



Between 1<sup>st</sup> street and 2<sup>nd</sup> street, on Broadway, Visual Art by Aslia Tusavul stood according to literature administered by walking attendants. 30,000 straws sewn together and strung in rows across 50 feet of steel frame stood. The art was commissioned by the city according to the artist, Asli Tusaval, who was standing near.



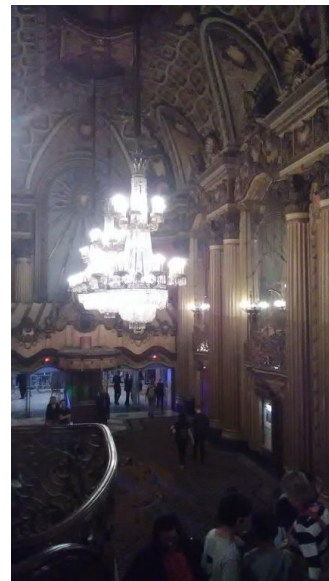
Heading south on Broadway, two sidewalk artist painted at 2<sup>nd</sup> street; 21 wreaths were also for sale, by booth representatives between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> street and a Block Party to the west on 4<sup>th</sup> street, between Hill and Broadway, celebrated with booths and street artist.



On the other side of the street, between Broadway and Spring Street, on 4<sup>th</sup> street, another Beer Garden sold drinks. On the western side of Broadway, between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> street, rows of booths sold various festival merchandise.



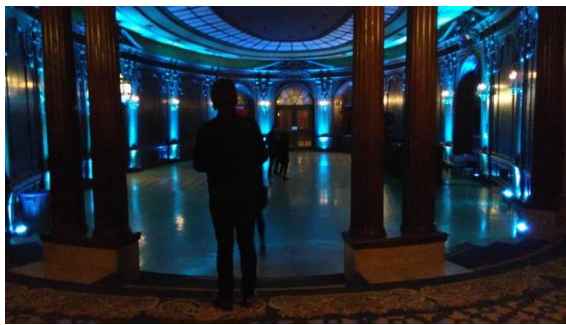
Between 6<sup>th</sup> street and 7<sup>th</sup> street on Broadway, the Los Angeles Theatre accepted foot traffic from the festival. The balcony was railed with wood in a U shape.



Along either side of the balcony is room for thirty people. Three ceiling frescos, one large and centered between two smaller frescos surrounding the larger one, decorated the theatre. Ornamentally decorated walls extend to the ceiling.



Nine chandeliers, three large and six small, hang in the lobby. On the sub-level, large well-decorated bathrooms surround a dance floor.



An attendant sold drinks from a small booth. I purchased a six dollar Pabs Blue Ribbon and drank while trying to dance while a DJ played music.

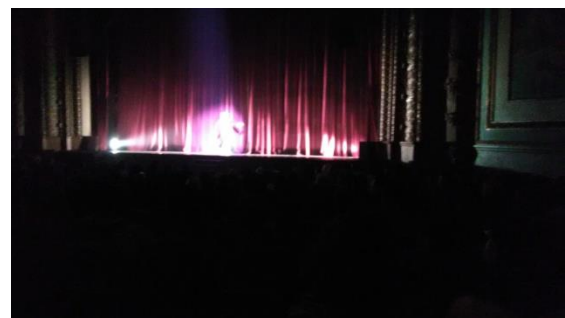


Between 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> street on Broadway, the Globe Theatre hosted a dance party; a VIP

lounge is upstairs along with a single bar. Two bars are on the bottom floor along with a single stage. Four couches with drink tables behind velvet rails were open for resting.



Between 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> street on Broadway, is the Palace Theatre. There is a small stage with velvet curtains. Two paintings, large and framed, help create an antique appearance, overall. The balcony is shaped in a half-circle and there are four pillars which appear to support the theatre.



Nearly seven hours into the event, at 10pm-10:45pm, I made it to the Orpheum Theatre. There is a half-circle balcony surrounded by six smaller balconies.



On each smaller balcony are two gargoyles guarding a decorative interior.



In addition to seating, there are six ceiling windows, for low lighting, and gold embroidery and pillars decoratively used.

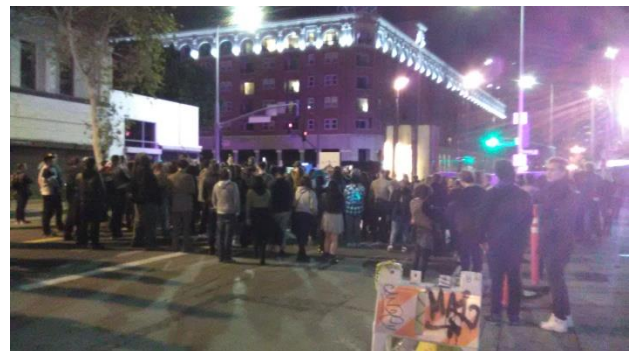


At nearly 11pm, eleven low riders were on display at "Joe's Auto Park," according to signs

for the parking lot. The cars were behind velvet ropes and comparison, one to the other, offered tutorially displayed information.



At 11pm, the Theater at Ace Hotel closed to the public, ending the night. Overall, *A Night on Broadway* was enormous and the theaters were richer than many others. The history of Broadway street is still developing thanks to councilmember Jose Huizar's work: to cast light on Downtown LA's intriguing past.



## Pleasantly Surprised by the Year to Come



Developments in Beverly Hills are beginning to become increasingly important as Los Angeles, and elsewhere, celebrate the Chinese New Year. Promotional material has been placed along thoroughfares and ticketed events make the month of January interesting.



On Wilshire, in Beverly Hills, the Sabean Theater celebrated the Chinese New Year through music and theater. In the lobby, lanterns hung in the circular lobby and free standing literature described the show that was to come. After entering, to the left, an artist created small sculpted art with scissors and paper.



Description of important developments into this art where mounted on the walls and the wait was also interesting. An annual passport for the show was given out to those who asked and everything seemed well-explained.

The show opened up with choreographed music and then developed through dance and historical drama. The artistic interpretation of a drunken boxer was worth remembering along with solo artists and larger acts that required multiple performers. Popular music along with ethnic minorities of China developed the show and delivered what was a complete and entertaining event.



Wanting to know more of the Chinese New year after the show concluded, I found myself

pleasantly surprised to find the same lanterns hanging in the 3rd St promenade in Santa Monica. From there, I found a great view and celebrated the year of the Rat with a drink on a quiet Sunday while thinking of the year to come.





## A Feeling That Action Is To Come, Godzilla!



May 30<sup>th</sup> at 4pm, *Godzilla: King of the Monsters* will begin showing at the ArchLight in Hollywood. Memorabilia from various films, worn by the cast, sits behind a glass display and the board, with show times, is well-lit and huge in appearance. The attendant knew by heart the time of the first showing and guided me through the theater's interface. We found the show times together and he described to me the option for 3-D and whether or not the showing had a documentary included. Outside, the Dome of the theater is well-decorated by a large lizard head and 'what will this movie be about?' is worth-asking. As I gazed upon this enormous object breaking through the Dome, I could not help but feel it would be an action movie.





## A Unique View of Star Trek Discovery

The months of May, June, and July of this year, 2019, will be open to the public at the Paley Center for Media in Beverly Hills for viewing memorabilia from Star Trek Discovery showing on CBS All Access.

Science Fiction props, miniature models, and furniture from the world of Star Trek, on the first floor, easily draw the attention of the patrons to this free, ticketed event. Several free standing costumes fitted on to mannequins fill in the surrounding space and characterization is meticulous. The costumes are elaborately woven and the weapons of the implied world are descriptive through fantasy.



The walkway heading up feels exaggerated from the long steps of the staircase and has costumed figures at either end. Artwork can also be found on either end of the staircase and the feeling that more is to come further draws in patrons.

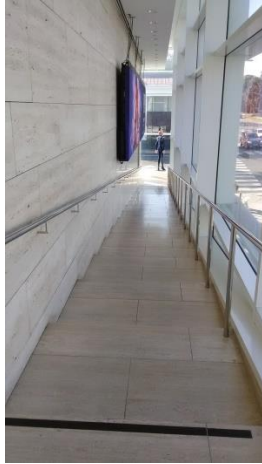
The Stanley E. Hubbard Gallery on the second floor was also interesting due to the masks and costumes within. Several masks and four more costumes along with fantasy artwork, that develops the story, enhances the room and two large Teleprompters intermittently fill in patrons with further information regarding Season Two.



The attendant at the booth relayed to me a comprehensive story about recent events at the museum, which according to the staff member behind the booth, included a private event at the museum wherein the cast for the show attended. I listened intently and found the conversation helpful as an instructional aid to understanding the Star Trek universe found within the Paley Center for Media.

A hallway between the first and second floor was filled with several more costumes and a hanging character with what appeared to be wings, which summoned imagery of fantasy and exotic worlds of imagination, were exciting

descriptors of what appears to be a great show on CBS All Access. I enjoyed the very sobering look at what goes into such an in-depth creation and a look at the show is on my list of things to do.



## See. Hear. Play.



By Brandon Lund

Current events in Pasadena were immersive and a pleasure to attend: *“Third Thursdays: See.Hear.Play. In the Playhouse District.”* A booth attendant directed me from El Molino Ave at Colorado Blvd., which is down the street from the Pasadena City Playhouse, towards Union St. at Los Robles Ave. where they were handing out free shaved ice to the first 100 people to attend. Picnic tables, with pillared tents, shaded pedestrians eating shaved ice from the heat and the museum next door was open to the public. A handful of non-traditional chairs were also placed in the parking lot for people to enjoy. The bottoms of the chairs were uneven and round, which made sitting an on-going, circular/angular experience.

After strolling through the museum’s enriching material, some of which was interactive through drawers that could be pulled from cabinetry, to observe the content inside, I sat in the museum’s central auditorium where three musicians sat at the foot of descending stairs which faced each other. Chairs were placed in

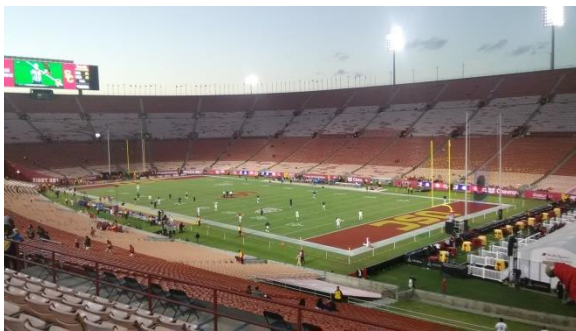
the space provided and the show played for several dozen people. The musician’s took a break at 8pm at which time I began to record the remainder of the show through an audio recorder. One musician played cello, one played sitar, and the other play percussions from a seated position. The mixture of musical influence and the abundance of what the musician’s displayed, through brevity and informed discussion, swept through the evening with insight into music from elsewhere.

Pasadena was very hot and, though walking to the corner streets where the events took place was bearable, I was happy to sit. Music, free foods, and museum exhibits filled the evening with a sense of the city as host to patrons instead of pedestrians. The evening overall was worth waiting till the end of the event which concluded at 9pm.

## The Events and College Football



NCAA football was pastime worthy and a fun season that was full of events. The ASU alumni association provided several team-spirit events in Los Angeles and the local alumni were allowed to attend. Up to twenty people a game, sometimes more, watched on big screens and invitations were sent by email over the season. Arizona State University is a part of the Southern PAC -12 conference. USC and University of Arizona also belong in the southern conference. The teams played in Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, which is south of downtown Los Angeles.



The sections began to fill in an hour and a half before kick-off along with practice, which started a half hour earlier. Fireworks took place at "sixty minutes till kick-off," which took place ten minutes till 8pm. The USC Trojans blocked a punt early in the first quarter which resulted in a return and a touchdown. The University of

Arizona Wildcats scored two field goals in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter and USC scored two touchdowns.



USC scored a touchdown first in the third quarter followed by two touchdowns by University of Arizona back to back. A Trojan mascot mounted on a horse rallied the crowd in the fourth and USC scored another touchdown followed by two University of Arizona touchdowns and a two point conversion which brought the game to (35-35). USC scored two more touchdowns in the fourth to win (49-35). Both teams ended up playing in NCAA bowl games according to ncaa.com.



Another important NCAA bowl game was promoted downtown with a "Bash." The Rose Bowl Bash took place the day before the game and the L.A. times covered the famous parade the day of the game, which took place in Pasadena. A crab cake truck was parked in front of Macy's on 7<sup>th</sup> street and a free standing schedule of the event was placed in front.



A small field where children tossed footballs was in the center of the courtyard and lawn chairs surrounded the field. A tent with Rose Bowl official merchandise was placed near descending escalators and an option to be photographed with a prominently displayed trophy was available.



Two screens to the south of the field were placed as backdrops for a beer garden where permission was given to enter after an I.D. was presented. The D.J. was positioned above the field looking down at the event and five streamers stretched across the courtyard. Balloon shrines to the Georgia Bulldogs and the Oklahoma Sooners acted as photo opportunities and the game seemed to begin from there.



The Rose bowl between the Georgia Bulldogs and the Oklahoma Sooners began at 2:08pm the next day and the game was exciting to watch. I purchased one-iced tea and one beer at Barney's Beanery in West Hollywood and continued to watch till the end of the game. Twelve screens in one dining room showed the game. Memorabilia, articles from over the years, and neon signs cover the walls and two pool tables are centrally placed. A breakaway touchdown in the third quarter by Georgia and a turnover touchdown return in the fourth quarter by Oklahoma highlighted exciting moments. Eventually, Georgia defeated Oklahoma in double overtime, (54-48).



## Regarding Opera and the Road Further: “The Abduction from the Seraglio”

Downtown is hilly and steep heading north. The LA Opera is one of many interesting venues and important shows in this area. The building, from floor to balcony, is imposing and full of décor. Once seated, conversation is enough to begin the next two and a half hour journey aboard the Orient Express.

*The Abduction from the Seraglio* was worthwhile though it could be confusing at times. There are very beautiful moments when the affections of those involved in two love triangles become obvious. When Blonde and Pedrillo declare their affection alongside Konstanze and Belmonte, while the stage is split between two scenes, the opera reaches a richer depth. However, the comedy involved in developing the plot moves the piece forward. Osmin is extremely funny and Pedrillo’s slapstick inventions serve the plot more than the confusion of love that surrounds Konstanze and Blonde.

The romance of travel from Istanbul to Paris is exciting and successful. A large teleprompter above the stage projects English lyrics and the stage was tightly fit together. Intermittently, a large map tracks the progress of the Orient

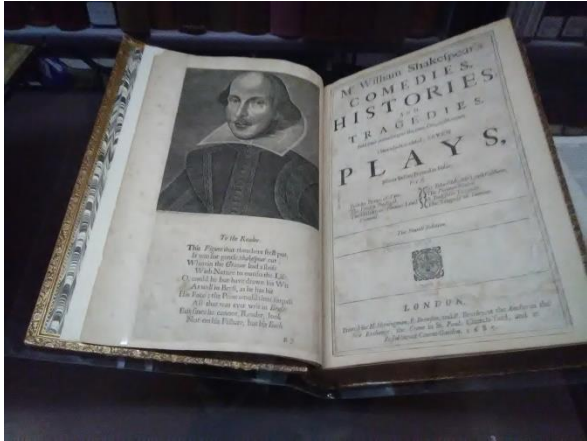
Express and the passengers struggle to come together from there.

Throughout the two and a half hour show, there are points when the orchestra is transformative and breathtaking. The conductor James Conlon’s pre-opera conversation, his thoughts in understanding Mozart’s deeper concerns, help the audience connect with Mozart. To understand James Conlon’s choices as a conductor would aid a member of the audience as much as understanding the composer’s genius. The comedy’s romantic moments are enriched by Mozart’s creativity and depth in music composition.

The opera was important and I will be attending more. Two and a half hours can be a plunge but such a strong impression raises further concerns over the depth of such an immersive experience. A lot can be said in a single show. I would not go further as a patronizing citizen without wanting to know more of opera and the journey aboard its expanding horizon.



<https://www.laopera.org/news/Gallery/201617-Season/Abduction/>



## The First and Fourth Folio on Display, Downtown L.A.

By Brandon Lund

The reputation of Shakespeare deserves more credit than can be given without perspective. The idea that what can be said with style stifles when compared to England's heroic bard holds true. Genius pokes holes in hubris and casts light while many people struggle with their endeavors in the arts. To further develop the argument that his reputation should be understood is interesting and an important way to come to terms with Shakespeare.

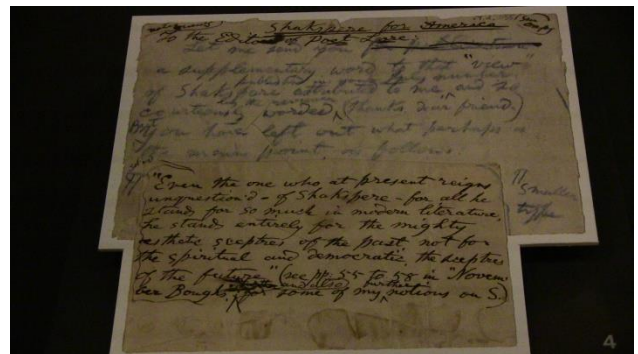


The public library in Downtown Los Angeles has displayed Shakespeare's reputation through rare books. The collection is stunning and timeless. The perspective is enriching and vast. The brevity of material is centuries old. The

books have weathered edges and their appearance is personalized through readership. The few people who have read the books through the centuries have left a few imperfections around the edges, which are interesting considering that the plays are survived by many of the books displayed, including the First Folio.

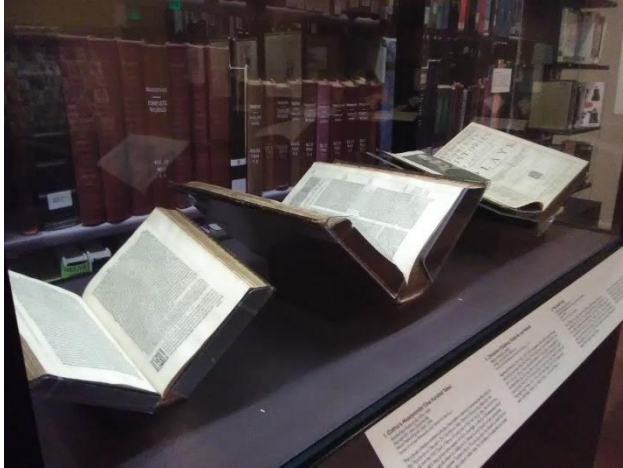


The later portion of the series focuses on Shakespeare's reputation with some of American literature's greatest authors. Ralph Waldo Emerson's copy of Shakespeare's plays has been placed centrally among the towering figures showcased. His name is written in the corner of the title page and his obvious admiration is given deferentially. Walt Whitman is similar though his tone is perhaps reflective. Shakespeare's work does strike the competing author as formidable in comparison and Whitman does appear anxious. His hand written notes can be read with scrutiny:





*“Even the one who at present reigns unquestion’d—of Shakespeare—for all he stands for so much in modern literature, he stands for entirely for the mighty aesthetic sceptres of the past not for the spiritual and democratic the sceptres of the future [...]” Walt Whitman*



The evolution of England’s literary tradition can be seen at once. The source material for “Othello,” and “Measure for Measure,” along with the source material for Shakespeare’s middle period, the historically based plays, lie side by side with the Fourth Folio. The audience can imagine the author thumbing through the books until inspiration strikes and his full range as a playwright is realized.



The rare books on display are fascinating and the public library has provided a great service for its patrons. The early portion of the series focuses on the Family of John Wilkes Booth,

Edward Dale, an early immigrants who brought the first copy of the Second Folio to America, as well as others. Famous pamphlets can be seen and an early recording of Othello is accessible. The venue was striking from beginning to end and it was an honorable experience to see the First and Fourth Folio which were some of the more exciting books on display.



## Judges of Wisdom

When history describes importance it does so through sacred objects that walk in tandem with our heroes, which are passed along, like fragile gods, from age to age. In doing so, we are given the opportunities to be nosy and to pry into the judgement of what is considered “wisdom.” The complement that comes from the echoes of history is a hero, who is oftentimes a reflection of affluence and responsible for adding something new. However, value is not an amount it is judgement. It is akin to management. Since people vary, they often choose what revitalizes their beliefs. Therefore, we cherish our fragile deities in order to manage what is considered wisdom which revitalizes the value and overall picture of any group of people.

How do we go about managing the things we say so that they may increase in value? We socialize, compete, and express our perception. Some ideas are good some are not. There are consequences to poor judgement. What is considered wisdom is important. So much is remembered when pieces are placed side by side until a full picture begins to illustrate through joyous self-expression. USC’s Pacific

Asian Museum has an exciting progression of Religious Art in Pasadena. The choice of wood for many of the representations raises concern for those concerned and unfamiliar with the longevity of wood but the ideas conveyed through Buddha and Eastern religion were rich and easily cherished. Buddha is both king and universal teacher. Buddhism, from Vietnam to Burma and Myanmar, varied in the depiction of a king as either humble or stately and benevolent. Buddha would sometimes play king in order to enlighten an earthly king’s behavior. The variety of Buddhist depiction obviously serves a purpose among people from different social strata. An overall sense of wisdom is ingeniously depicted through hands that imply universal time passing. Anjalimudra (gesture of prayer and greeting) hands above, Dhyanamudra (gesture of meditation) implies lessons passed along through generations now distill in a single figure. The audience could easily perceive the art portraying something incredibly important captured in the hands of Buddha, perhaps a universal lesson that, if lost, is still conveyed through a person.



What seems obvious is anything but. The venue seems small and the artwork does not fulfill the full range of curiosity until the small hidden entrance in the gift shop building illuminates the full collection. Tobacco boxes, scrolls, and pottery tucked away fill nearly three full rooms with religious and historical artwork.



The overall venue had the depth that an audience would expect from a museum that implies variety and importance. The beginning does seem as though the museum has over advertised the scale of its collection until the venue opens up a building over. Close inspection reveals details that strike the imagination and challenge assumptions of what has transpired elsewhere and what has been assumed by up-bringing and daily life. To cope, as many often do, omits curiosity and enforces routine. The details that survive the ups and downs of longevity reinforce awareness of foreign cultures and provide a sense of coming full circle.





## The Skin of the Dead Sea Scrolls

By Brandon Lund

A museum for most people is a place where learning through an immediate encounter with something rare is expected. The glassy thoroughfares, the collections each asking for attention from an audience, oftentimes give way to a perspective that is closer to a handshake than a classroom. The Dead Sea Scrolls create an immediate understanding that is unique because the audience is no longer reading about history they are observing history from its inception. Perhaps the richest and most rewarding aspect of the Dead Sea Scrolls is the biblical context.

Twelve Psalms from the Bible, written on animal skin in Hebrew, can be observed alongside portions of Exodus. The handwriting, the detail and implied skill, begins to humanize and focus their creation. Most people spend their entire lives struggling with notions of hereafter, death, reward of life, and morality; to stand within a respective step of an original piece of animal skin inscribed with biblical text and see the ancient scribes handwriting begins to create a sense of moving forward. These biblical prayers, poems, and narratives do have their origins.

Leading to the room-size circular glass display showing pieces of Scripture and parchment is a series of Iron Age arrowheads and water jugs. The character of these pieces is obvious. The arrowheads speak of need and hunger. The rust showcases their fragility but their age begins to reveal a world that was perhaps dangerous in many ways that the audience does not understand without further study. The displays are not exactly art but the humanity involved in their creation is obvious.

Creativity tends to hold a person's focus and one cannot help but feel that these bronze-age coins and ancient water jugs were created for aesthetic purposes instead of utility. A Galilean Pithos with delicate fissures and threads of age that have endured stares at the viewer like a totem. The apparitional affect is theatrical and one cannot help but feel the desert's withering heat lifting from these ancient pots and coins.

The Dead Sea Scrolls, showcased at the California Science Center, was short but the experience was not without its high points. The little tiny pieces of text, sometimes biblical sometimes non-biblical, begin to create the effect of people involved in the creation of history. Their presence is ghostly and their priorities range from poetry to narrative wisdom. I do recommend the experience but perhaps historical impact and not the duration of the tour is the strong point of the venue.