

Los Angeles County keeps free concerts playing

June 21, 2008

WILL free concerts continue in Los Angeles County despite the decline in the Music Performance Fund ["Hitting a Sound Barrier," by Mike Boehm, June 14]? The answer is a resounding yes. Los Angeles County's Board of Supervisors is replacing the lost funds to ensure that the 60,000 people who enjoy these concerts each year don't lose out. More than 50 concerts in parks, libraries and other public sites are scheduled featuring groups like Aadaawe at MacArthur Park (July 10), Mariachi Divas at Belvedere Park (July 12) and Taikoproject at the Allendale branch of the Pasadena Public Library (July 29) -- and that's just a few of the 15 concerts scheduled in July alone. For a complete schedule through October go to www.lacountyarts.org/free_july08.html.

We hope that the Musicians Performance Fund will find a way to continue its funding of free concerts across the country but, in the interim, their legacy of live music for everyone lives on here in Los Angeles County.

Laura Zucker

executive director

Los Angeles County

Arts Commission

Los Angeles

Bravo, Cheech

ISPENT a wonderful Father's Day at LACMA, inspired by the article ("It's a Battle Won for Cheech Marin," by Agustin Gurza, June 14) on Cheech Marin's art collection exhibit, "Los Angelenos." I have to say that of all the art I have ever seen at LACMA, including the Van Gogh and Diego Rivera collections, I have never found a collection as consistently excellent. Every one of the paintings (and the incredible pastels) was alive with color, energy, expression and personality.

"Phantom Sightings," on the other hand, was hit and miss. But it was not a disappointment, just a rewarding-in-its-own-way contrast to the high level of quality and intensity in the "Los Angelenos" exhibit.

John Stephens

Aliso Viejo

Art Center . . . is

AS THE educational leaders of the Art Center College of Design, we would like to respond to the article "Uproar at Art Center" (by Mike Boehm, June 11), which we find selective in its sources and unbalanced in its perception. While there is indeed a passionate debate about many important issues at Art Center, we are a creative community engaged in the ongoing improvement of our education and facilities, and we expect and encourage different opinions about our future direction.

However, the article paints an incomplete portrait of the college that is simply not accurate. Specifically, we strongly reject the article's implication that educational standards have fallen at Art Center and that our graduates' portfolios are less compelling to employers.

By focusing on only a few examples, exclusively from the industrial design field (we offer 14 different majors), the article overlooks the tremendous support we consistently receive in the form of internships, sponsored educational projects, scholarships and employment of our recent graduates. Nor does the article consider the international recognition of our art alums, the numerous awards our students win in international competitions, nor the top rankings we receive in every art and design school survey. Art Center's job placement record remains as strong as it ever was -- a statistic The Times failed to investigate.

Wendy Adest

associate chair,

Foundation Studies

Mark Breitenberg

dean of Humanities

and Design Sciences

Laurence Dreiband

chair, Fine Art

Fred Fehlau

dean of Academic Affairs

Ann Field

chair, Illustration

Jeremy Gilbert-Rolfe

chair, Graduate Fine Art

Nik Hafermaas

dean of

Communication Design

Dennis Keeley

chair,

Photography & Imaging

Ross LaManna

chair, Film Department

David Mocarski

chair,

Environmental Design

Robert Peterson

chair, Broadcast Cinema

Stewart Reed

chair,

Transportation Design

Marty Smith

chair, Product Design

Russert's wishes

IREALLY liked Tim Russert, but I think if he saw all of the continuous coverage (especially on cable TV) about him instead of the news of the world, he would be embarrassed and upset.

R.J. Johnson

North Hollywood

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