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Exhibits to explore birth of L.A. art scene

Pacific Standard Time will be staged around the Southland starting in October 2011.

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The organizers of Pacific Standard Time signaled their intention to start spreading the word about their colossal visual arts collaboration set to start in October 2011 at a media event Thursday at the members-only Soho House on Sunset Boulevard. In attendance were dozens of local museum directors and publicists.

In essence, Pacific Standard Time is a set of museum exhibitions that will each in their own way explore the birth of the L.A. art scene, to be staged by about 50 institutions next fall in Southern California. The Getty Trust has organized and largely funded the event, distributing about \$7.3 million to its institutional partners since 2008.

Now that the exhibitions (currently 47) and accompanying publications (roughly 20) are under way, the publicity and marketing efforts are about to begin. At the Soho House, over cocktails, meatballs and tuna tartare, the Getty announced a new website for the project, www.pacificstandardtime.org. It also screened a new promotional video by TBWA/Chiat/Day for Pacific Standard Time that uses the slogan: "One era. A million moments of impact."

The glossy four-minute video, found on the website and designed to be used at events, features cameos by some museum directors who are participating in the initiative: Ann Philbin of the Hammer Museum, Charmaine Jefferson of the California African American Museum, Michael Govan of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and Jeffrey Deitch of the Museum of Contemporary Art, along with Chon Noriega, director of the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center, which is organizing four of the shows on tap for 2011. They each take a shot at summing up the difficult-to-summarize event.

In the video Noriega calls it "a surveying, documenting and preserving of the archive, to tell the history of what happened in Los Angeles in the middle of the 20th century." Philbin calls it an "exciting" idea — "turning Southern California into one big extended museum with the freeways functioning as the hallways between the galleries." The video opens with archival shots of pioneering L.A. artists and ends with a montage showcasing the Pacific Standard Time logo — an abstract clock face that resembles a sun — on golden yellow street banners and bus signs.

Several new marketing, communications and outreach sponsors were announced, including Bank of America as the "presentation sponsor." Deborah Marrow, interim president and chief executive of the Getty Trust, declined to disclose the bank's financial contri-

bution (or the project's marketing and advertising budgets) but emphasized that its role "goes well beyond financial sponsorship to include incredibly generous in-kind support — they will be helping us get the word out at ATMs, local branches, wherever they have a presence."

Philbin was the final speaker. "We all have our marching orders," she said. "We need to go home and put the opening of Pacific Standard Time in our calendars and tell our friends and our colleagues." She noted that the event is not just going to be for Californians and to expect "a huge hospitality initiative" that "takes a little page from the book of the art-fair circuit."

Philbin also offered updates on the performing/public arts festival, slated for Jan. 20-29, 2012. Two dozen performances are being developed, including Eleanor Antin's restaging at the Hammer Museum of her 1979 "Before the Revolution," organized by LAX Art, and Suzanne Lacy revisiting her 1977 project about sexual violence against women, "Three Weeks in May," to be called "Three Weeks in January" and organized by LACE.

To get out the word, the Rubell Family Collection in Miami is hosting public talks on the growth of the L.A. art scene during Art Basel Miami Beach this December. Pacific Standard Time also expects to have some kind of presence at the art fair in Basel, Switzerland, and at the Venice Biennale in 2011.

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