

REGEN PROJECTS

Miranda, Carolina. "Art Insider: Painter Elliott Hundley Puts A Pin In It." [KCRW](#) (October 6, 2026) [ill.] [online]



Hey there, Los Angeles!

It's culture writer **Carolina A. Miranda** all up in your inbox.

Last Friday afternoon, I popped over to the **Dorothy Chandler Pavilion** to see a remarkable new painting by the Cuban-born, LA-based artist **Enrique Martínez Celaya**. At a whopping 70 feet wide — bigger than anything the artist has ever made — the painting will function as the monumental stage curtain for **LA Opera**. The painting shows two children holding birdcages, but it contains additional surprises: when it is lifted, other imagery is revealed below. "I wanted," said Martínez at the press preview, "to bring to the opera a sense of expectation."

Jordan Riefe has the story of how this kinetic piece came together. You can find **LA Opera's** upcoming programs [here](#).

This week, I review **Elliott Hundley's** absorbing solo show at Regen Projects, but first, three events worth peeping:

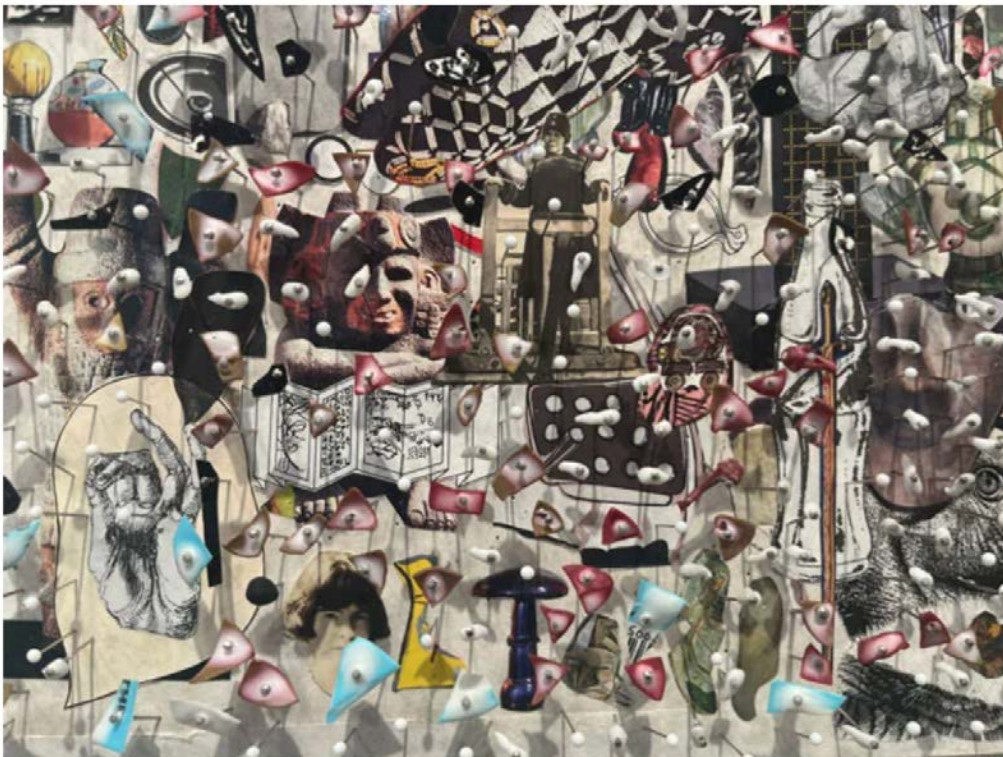
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1. **Democracy Sessions, a multi-venue series led by Wild Up.** The adventurous musical ensemble is staging performances ruminating on the political order in advance of the midterms, including two key shows this weekend at REDCAT: *Order and Its Others* and *The Room Begins to Rise*. *Through October 31st, admission from \$25; wildup.org.*
2. **Bradley Boboc and Felipe Dulzaides, at ARCANE Space.** Two artists — one from LA, the other from Cuba — examine daily life in their respective cities via objects, language, and sounds. *Opens October 9th; see @arcane.space on Instagram.*
3. **Mezzanine Presents: Edvard Munch at Brain Dead Studios.** The intrepid screening series presents English director Peter Watkins' singular docudrama on the Norwegian painter. *October 11th at 1 PM, admission \$16.50; studios.wearebraindead.com.*

Now, onto the show...

At top: Enrique Martínez Celaya's *The Things We Don't Know*, created for LA Opera. (Carolina A. Miranda)

BITS AND PIECES



A detail of Elliott Hundley's, *Tray (23.5.23.1)* (2026), from his solo show at Regen Projects. (Carolina A. Miranda)

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What might it be like to see the contents of your mind pinned to a wall? You would likely turn up the random bits of daily life: a Coke bottle, a feather, an automotive rim. You might also find inspiring objects of sublime beauty and strength, like the **Piraeus Athena**, an ancient Greek bronze. Surely, there would be dreamlike scenarios: arrangements of random body parts floating in space — heads, legs, a flaccid penis or two — or imagined rituals set against backdrops of brilliant red. It would be a phantasmagoria of sensations mixed with fragments of memory. The falling leaves of autumn. A bullet casing. An ecstatic dance.

This is exactly what LA artist **Elliott Hundley** does in his work. From afar, his paintings look like expressionistic canvases bursting with swirls of color, pattern, and collage. But move in closer, and you'll find that he has adhered hundreds (if not thousands) of tiny photographs and other materials to the surface with slender sewing pins. These give his paintings a three-dimensional quality, with the attached images hovering just over the surface of the panel. It also imbues his paintings with a sense of ephemerality, since pins — unlike gesso or glue — can be easily rearranged.

"His collections of subject matters are not unlike insects pinned in a specimen case," the artist and critic **Gary Brewer** once wrote in *Whitehot Magazine*. "Indeed, one might say that in his art there is an element of collecting and categorizing experiences, memories, and stories."

Hundley's singular approach is in evidence in his seventh solo show at **Regen Projects** in Hollywood. Titled ***Book of Sand***, after a short story by the Argentine **Jorge Luis Borges**, it features nearly 20 new paintings of various scales, as well as a pair of large textile collages (a new medium for Hundley) — one of which incorporates pieces of his mother's bridal veil.



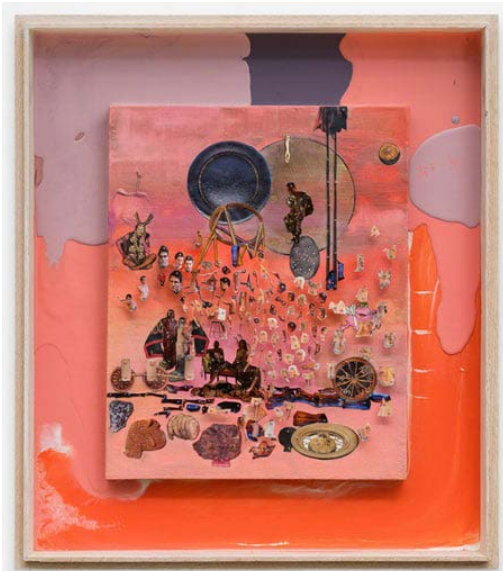
Hekabe's Star (2023) is one of two textile collages by Hundley. (Evan Bedford / Regen Projects)

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Born in Greensboro, N.C. in 1975, the artist relocated to Los Angeles to complete his graduate studies at **UCLA**, where he received his Master's in 2005. From the beginning, he has skirted trends. He emerged from graduate school at a time when digital media was becoming a common tool, yet his process is resolutely handmade. And his dense arrangements seem to channel the hallucinatory Flemish painter **Hieronymus Bosch**. Moreover, in a contemporary art world steeped in chilly conceptualism, his paintings burst with theatricality and emotion. (Included among the many images pinned to their surfaces are photos of his friends improvising plays.)

Often, Hundley will begin a series by turning to literature, such as the epics of the ancient Greeks, as well as works by early 20th-century French playwrights like **Jean Genet** and **Antonin Artaud**. ***The Balcony*** (2020-21), for example, a sprawling ten-panel piece that was displayed at the citywide ***Prospect.5*** in New Orleans in 2021, and later, in a staggering solo show at Regen Projects in 2023, was directly inspired by an absurdist play of the same name by Genet. In that story — and in Hundley's painting — politics and fiction collide in unexpected ways within the confines of a bordello. (I wrote about it for the *New York Review of Books*.)

The new show takes its title from Borges's short story about a mysterious book with a continuously shifting text that has no beginning and no end. But on this go-around, the artist set aside direct literary inspiration to see where his unconscious might take him. Borges's tale, however, serves as a good instruction manual for approaching Hundley's work: dip in at random and follow a path, wherever it takes you. The works are never static, continuously revealing something surprising and new.



Ritual (2026), is one of a series of new works by Hundley that do not draw directly from literature. (Evan Bedford / Regen Projects)

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Ritual (2026), for example, looks like a Surrealist landscape from a distance; up close, I saw what looked like an array of body parts trapped in a spell. One of my favorites, *Tray (23.5.23.1)* (2026), contains an explosive arrangement of largely black and white images around a central depiction of a snake, a creature that can be interpreted both as a symbol of destruction or resurrection. All of it comes together like a waking dream. Hundley may draw from tradition, but the way he overstimulates with information feels very contemporary. “My work promotes a fractured reality,” he once told the critic **David Pagel**. “I am not critiquing a fractured culture. I’m trying to show its multifaceted character. Artaud did not conceive his body as a unified whole. I admire that. I mean, I like a fractured existence. Hegemony? That’s no fun. But a fractured reality leaves one with a lot more to navigate.” Ideas that could not be more pertinent in 2026.



Elliott Hundley, Book of Sand, is on view at Regen Projects through October 24th; regenprojects.com.

WHILE YOU'RE THERE...

Regen also has a small but worthwhile display of work by the late **Silke Otto-Knapp**, whose greyscale watercolors of people and landscapes are the opposite of Hundley’s elaborate pieces, but nonetheless channel dreamlike states. Plus, a 10-minute walk to the west at **Lisson**, you’ll find a show of paintings and sculpture by the Bay Area artist **Oliver Lee Jackson**, who has a knack for teasing human forms out of bundles of quivering lines.

AROUND THE INTERNET

- In **Minnesota**, activists unveil a quilt honoring the thousands of state residents who have been arrested by **ICE**.
- **Sam Lubell** has an essential piece in the *LA Times* about how the **Lucas Museum** is sealing itself off from South LA and **Expo Park** with fencing — even as it sits on public land.
- And **Matt Stromberg** has a report in *Hyperallergic* about troubles at the **Tom of Finland Foundation**.
- An important **Chicano punk rock collection** is on view at **Pitzer College**.
- The collection of **Kim Namjoon** (otherwise known as **RM** of the band **BTS**) is on view at **SFMOMA**.
- A new study by **Museums Moving Forward** reports that “poor management” is driving workers from museums.
- **The Getty** has acquired a newly discovered portrait by **Diego Velázquez**.
- Artist **Jason Underhill** has a moving appreciation of the late **Simone Forti**, who often found art in circumstance.

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- **Rafael Ferrer**, an important Puerto Rican-born painter and conceptual artist whose work defied tropes, is dead at 93.
- **Tanya Aguiñiga** has been named artist-in-residence for the **LA County Cultural Climate Commons**.
- Signing off with this trippy story about how **a new triennial** focused on Norcal will be displaying “the leading collection of **LSD blotters**.”