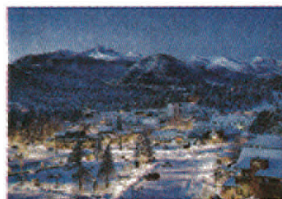


THE DENVER POST

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WHAT A YEAR IT WAS

Jupiter Images

One thing you can't call 2013: boring. Movies, theater, fine arts, television, music, books – the year was an exciting one in Denver and beyond, and our culture critics were thoroughly entertained.

Art



Nick Cave's colorful soundsuits at the Denver Art Museum made everyone's summer better.
Ray Mark Rinaldi, Denver Post file

The 13 cultural moments that made the year memorable

By Ray Mark Rinaldi *The Denver Post*

Culture is best measured in moments, and the Front Range was full of memorable ones in 2013; exhibits, performances and events that entertained the masses while moving us forward in artful ways.

Here are the 13 things people are still talking about.

1. Denver Night, Biennial of the Americas, July 19. With its world-class art installations, star-studded conversations and public parties, the Biennial gave Denver a good time and a belief that this city can be an international player — with some work. This Civic Center fête inspired a real moment of community.

2. Kyle Clark's rant against viewer photographs, Nov. 21. The quirky 9News anchor took an extended, good-natured jab at his own audience in a segment criticizing viewers for sending in lazy snapshots of snow-covered patio furniture during winter storms. It was hilarious, but more than that, it was an indictment of TV news' devolution into a world where the efforts of pajama-wearing iPhones outrank the good work — and take away the air time — of actual photojournalists.

3. Andrew Litton performs Ravel's Piano Concerto in G major, Nov. 24. A lot of us were already in like with the CSO's new music director, but when he stepped off the podium to play Ravel's coy masterpiece it turned to true love. Litton's reading was selfless and flawless, gentle and assured. Can't wait to hear him conduct Mahler in May.

4. The MCA Denver drops admission for teens, July 15. Admission, even when it's cheap, is a barrier to the arts, and the MCA came at it like a wrecking

ART

« FROM 1E

ball, letting anyone 18 and under in for free, all the time. The move, underwritten by the Merage Foundation, laid down a welcome mat to an art temple that will challenge them to grow into the creative class of adults this city needs. Up next there: Solos from Joel Swanson and Ian Fisher.

5. Maria Mosina dances in the Colorado Ballet's "Giselle" Oct. 4. Maria Mosina is a Denver treasure, and she took on the mother of all ballet roles with a self-assured romanticism that few dancers can match. See her soon before she retires.

6. CPR creates an arts news bureau, Nov. 13. Since the demise of the Rocky Mountain News in 2009, Denver has been a one-outlet town when it comes to mainstream arts journalism. This new operation, lead by Chloe Veltman, who completed her staffing last month, has much to prove — it was funded by the Bonfils-Stanton Foundation as a way of supporting the arts — and we will see if its reports are critical and objective. But, if the quality is high, we'll all be better off.

7. Phyllis Hutchinson Montrose exhibit at the Kirkland Museum, May 3. From out of nowhere — and at the age of 84 — Phyllis Montrose presented an exhibition of wildly imaginative, technically juiced surrealist paintings that made her the toast of town. To paraphrase Rhianna: where have you been all my life, Phyllis? The exhibition is over, but the Kirkland always has a few Montrose pieces on its walls.

8. Gregory Alan Isakov releases "The Weatherman," July 15. Colorado's most serious singer-songwriter's collection of earthy, low-volume tunes captured the folksy spirit of Boulder County while playing to the neo-traditional masses. A beautiful album, part Bob Dylan, part Leonard Cohen, and it cuts close to whoever you are. He's at the Aggie in Fort Collins Jan. 11.

9. Nick Cave presents "Sojourn," at The Denver Art Museum, June 9. The Chicago-based artist brought his resurrected thrift-store treasures to DAM and livened up summer. Cave's art says serious things about identity and consumerism, but it's a blast, too.

10. "I Sing Beijing" at the Elaine Wolf Theatre, March 17. The Denver-based



Asian Performing Arts Council had minor ambitions when it formed 25 years ago to support opera singers from overseas. But the operation turned international with "I Sing Beijing," which took Western singers to China to learn opera in Mandarin. This concert celebrated the triumph. A powerful DVD is out soon.

11. "Lightning Blues Express," at Denver International Airport, January-July. DIA is loaded with art, and much of it we pass by in a hurry. This performance piece by Humberto Duque — which had real actors wandering the terminals with blaring boom boxes disguised as carry-on luggage — was a traffic-stopper. Weird, smart and unpredictable.

12. The "Horsebarn" reopens in Curtis Park, Aug. 1. Humility and good sense rule architecture these days, thanks to the lingering effects of the recent recession. Within that, impressive work is getting done, like Tres Birds Workshop's gentle transformation of a 19th-century horse barn, built for the Denver City Railway Co., into a multitenant office building.

13. Clark Richert exhibition at Gildar Gallery, Nov. 15 (through Jan. 18). Abstract expressionist Richert, a founder of the legendary, 1960s arts commune Drop City, is a historic figure in Colorado art, and this small yet mighty exhibit found him, at 72, making some of his best work. Richert mines his past, but doesn't dwell on it like the rest of us do.

Phyllis Hutchinson Montrose's "The Messenger."

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~ Over for selected 2013 Kirkland Museum Acquisition Highlights ~



Central City, Colorado (Opera House on far right)
n.d., etching
by Jerry Albright (1921-2010)



Navajo Weaving, c. 1900, wool
[often used in Arts & Crafts interiors]



Night Dreams, 1945, oil on board
by Margaret Mullin (1910-1980)



Art Deco Nautilus Decanter, 1930-1934
by Cambridge Glass Co.
(1901-1958)



Yin and Yang, 1964, bronze, by Edgar Britton (1901-1982)
~ Gift of FirstBank, Cherry Creek, Denver ~



Guardian of the Road,
Central City, Colorado, 1935
watercolor on paper
by Virginia True (1900-1989)



Quasi Casual Operator, 2005, acrylic on canvas
by Bruce Price (b. 1958)



Art Nouveau Centerpiece Bowl, 1900 (English)
by Kate Harris (dates unknown)



Lujan Ranch, 1929, watercolor on paper
by Arnold Rönnebeck (1885-1947)



Platner Arm Chair, 1966
metal and upholstery
by Warren Platner (1919-2006)



Red / Blue Armchair, 1918-1923
painted wood
by Gerrit Rietveld (1888-1964, Dutch)
[Previously owned by Gerard van de Groenekan,
maker of most of Rietveld's furniture]



Zambesi Coffeepot, 1956
by Jessie Tait
(1928-2010, English)



Art Deco Furniture Suite, 1924-1925, wood
by Mieczysław Kotarbiński (1890-1943, Polish)
and Michel Herodek (dates unknown, Polish)
[Created for the Polish Pavilion at the 1925 Paris World's Fair]