



Ansel Adams, *Pictures on Top of Phonograph, Yanemitsu home*, 1943. Private collection.
COURTESY PHOTOGRAPHIC TRAVELING EXHIBITIONS.

BOOM STAFF

The *Boom* List

What to do, see, read, and hear this winter in California

Visit *Rain Room* at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. It sounds like a scene from one of those new dystopian novels about LA: rain has become so rare that the only way to experience it is at an exhibit at the county museum. In reality, *Rain Room* is an installation from the collaborative studio Random International that simulates a perpetual downpour, which—thanks to sensors—visitors can walk through without getting wet. Random International has said that *Rain Room* was “created to heighten awareness of people’s own presence in space,” and previous

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iterations in New York and London were enormously popular, drawing crowds so large some waited more than ten hours to get in. In Los Angeles, during an El Niño winter, the response may be a bit more complicated, if no less fascinating. Timed tickets are selling fast and are required to visit *Rain Room*, which is open until 6 March 2016.

Pay homage to Robert Motherwell at the de Young in San Francisco.

In 1937, the abstract expressionist painter Robert Motherwell heard André Malraux speak at a San Francisco rally for the Republican side of the Spanish Civil War. It provided inspiration for his work for the rest of his life. His series *Elegies to the Spanish Republic* includes more than 150 canvases. *Between Life and Death: Robert Motherwell's Elegies in Bay Area Collections* at the de Young—on exhibit until 6 March 2016—brings thirteen of those canvases together in one room. “Reflecting the chaos, turmoil, suffering, and moral uncertainties of the mid-twentieth century, the series is a testament to the timeless and transcendent aspects of the human condition, such as the coexistence of joy and pain, of hope and suffering, and of life and death,” says the museum.

Soak up the sounds of jazz in Los Angeles from the 1940s and the 2010s.

Composer and bassist Charles Mingus is more commonly associated with New York than LA. But Mingus grew up in Watts, and played and recorded in Southern California in the 1940s. The jazz giant is the subject of a new biography *Better Git It in Your Soul* by Krin Gabbard—an intellectual, emotional, and “interpretive” biography that offers a deep look into the soul of one of the twentieth century’s musical geniuses, and through Mingus, into the soul of jazz. For a deep look into LA’s jazz scene in the twenty-first century, there’s no better place to start than composer and saxophonist Kamasi Washington’s recent three-CD set, *The Epic*. Washington has toured and recorded with a wide range of fellow musical innovators from Southern Californian—including Kendrick Lamar, Flying Lotus, and Snoop Dog—but *The Epic* is aimed straight at reimagining and reinvigorating the sound of West Coast jazz, while paying homage to its roots, including Mingus.

See Ansel Adams’s photographs protesting Japanese American internment during World War II. When we think of

Ansel Adams’s photographs of the Sierra Nevada, we usually think of the austere beauty of photographs such as “Winter Sunrise, the Sierra Nevada, from Lone Pine, California,” taken in Owens Valley in 1944. There are no people present as the sun illuminates the sublime Eastern Sierra. But in 1944, Adams also published *Born Free and Equal*, a book protesting the treatment of Japanese Americans who were rounded up and sent to internment camps such as Manzanar, less than ten miles from Lone Pine, during World War II. *Manzanar: The Wartime Photographs of Ansel Adams* at the Skirball, in association with the Japanese American National Museum, presents fifty of Adams’s photographs from the book—photographs filled with the humanity and inhumanity of the internment camp. The exhibit is open through 21 February 2016.

Drink in San Francisco’s “legacy bars” with *High Spirits*.

San Francisco Heritage started a Legacy Bars and Restaurants project to draw attention to the character-filled, historic establishments that give life to the city’s neighborhoods. So far, a hundred bars and restaurants—each of which has been open for at least forty years, has distinctive architecture or design, or contributes to its surrounding neighborhood’s history—have been featured in the online guide. *San Francisco Chronicle* reporter J.K. Dineen focuses on the bars portion of the list in his new book *High Spirits*. With photographs, history, and stories of bartenders, drinkers, and the neighborhoods in which they imbibe, the book will help you wile away a convivial winter’s evening on a barstool or your own easy chair, with a good drink close at hand.

Survey Lewis deSoto’s Empire at the Robert and Frances Fullerton Museum of Art on the California State University, San Bernardino campus.

We featured a selection of photographs from artist Lewis deSoto’s forthcoming book *Empire* on the Boom website in 2015. In the exhibit deSoto explores his birthplace and ancestral Cahuilla homeland, the “marvelous and abject” landscape of Southern California’s Inland Empire: its deserts, lushly manicured lawns, freeways, and inland sea. Punctuating these single-frame images are panoramas of landscapes that capture infinitudes of detail. *Empire* is on view through 13 February 2016. **B**

Kamasi Washington on the cover of his album *The Epic*.

