

Nina Katchadourian

Spare Times for Children Listings for Sept. 9-15

By Laurel Graeber
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A select guide to cultural events for children, teenagers and families.

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‘AMERICA TO ZANZIBAR: MUSLIM CULTURES NEAR AND FAR’(through Jan. 31) You have to look hard for positive representations of the Muslim world in popular culture, and even harder for a way to make it accessible to the youngest Americans. This exhibition, at the Children’s Museum of Manhattan, aims to teach visitors 10 and under about a variety of Muslim communities. Divided into five sections, the show includes a global marketplace, an exploration of trade routes, a courtyard area and an investigation of architecture through different mosque styles. The final section is devoted to an American home, represented by a living room filled with objects donated by Muslims in the United States. The Tisch Building, 212 West 83rd Street, 212-721-1223, cmom.org.

‘THE ART OF DR. SEUSS COLLECTION’ (Sunday through Sept. 29) Imagine encountering three-dimensional versions of some of the crazy creatures Dr. Seuss invented. Children will be able to do just that at this exhibition, which consists of limited-edition artworks commissioned by the Seuss estate and reproduced from the private drawings and sculptures Theodor Seuss Geisel, a.k.a. Dr. Seuss (1904-1991), created for his own pleasure. The show includes fantastical wildlife sculpture from his “Unorthodox Taxidermy” series, like “The Carbonic Walrus,” “The Two-Horned Drouberhannis” and “The Goo-Goo-Eyed Tasmanian Wolghast.” And for those who would just like another look at the art from his children’s books, some of those illustrations are here, too. POP International Galleries, 195 Bowery, at Spring Street, Lower East Side, 212-533-4262, popinternational.com.

‘THE ART AND WHIMSY OF MO WILLEMS’ (through Sept. 25) Mr. Willems is the author of the much-loved picture book “Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!,” along with many other works. There’s no reason not to let the pigeon drive this exhibition at the New-York Historical Society, though, and so it does, along with Mr. Willems’s other creatures, like Elephant and Piggie, Cat the Cat and Knuffle Bunny. The show explores his creative process — it includes animation cels, sketches, wire sculptures and a video — and how New York often became his muse. Family programs are scheduled throughout the run, including readings of Mr. Willems’s books every weekday (except Mondays) at 2 p.m. and every Sunday at 11:30 a.m. 170 Central Park West, at 77th Street, 212-873-3400, nyhistory.org.

‘BUDDING ARTISTS’ (Friday through Sunday, and Tuesday through Thursday) Children may not know what Impressionism is, but they can explore its methodology at the New York Botanical Garden, currently offering the exhibition “Impressionism: American Gardens on Canvas.” Young visitors to the institution’s Everett Children’s Adventure Garden will see how landscapes inspired these artists, use the plantings to fire their own imaginations, learn the science involved in light and experiment with prisms. They can also take home a little Impressionist color: a coleus plant, which they’ll pot up themselves. (Through

Sept. 16.) Weekdays (except Monday), 1:30 to 5:30 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Bronx River Parkway (Exit 7W) and Fordham Road, Bedford Park, 718-817-8700, nybg.org.

'COOL FOR SCHOOL': NYC PENCIL CASES AND NYC BOOK COVERS (Saturday and Sunday) The witty cartoonist Roz Chast probably never considered herself remotely cool when she was going to school, but her work certainly has that status now: She has a whole exhibition at the Museum of the City of New York. This weekend children can explore that show, "Roz Chast: Cartoon Memoirs," for some wry city humor to apply to their own designs. On Saturday, the "Cool for School" workshop will be devoted to creating Chast-inspired pencil pouches; on Sunday, the focus will be Chast-inspired book covers. From 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Fifth Avenue at 103rd Street, 212-534-1672, mcny.org.

'DYNAMIC H2O' (through September) Children see New York City's water system in action every time they turn on a faucet. But just how does that water get into the pipes? This new outdoor exhibition at the Children's Museum of Manhattan allows small visitors to become architects, engineers and even plumbers as they learn how water makes its way from upstate reservoirs to their kitchen sinks. A 16-foot water table with interactive components will encourage them to make "rain," build aqueducts and conduct experiments with flow and pressure. Sussman Environmental Center, the Tisch Building, 212 West 83rd Street, 212-721-1223, cmom.org.

FILM FORUM JR.: 'THE RED BALLOON' AND 'A DOG'S LIFE'(Sunday) Some of the greatest films for children aren't recent computer-generated extravaganzas. Film Forum Jr., a program that introduces the young to classic cinema, is starting its fall season with "The Red Balloon," or "Le Ballon Rouge," Albert Lamorisse's nearly wordless French project from 1956, which stars Pascal Lamorisse (the director's son, then 6) as he follows the object of the title through the Belleville section of Paris. It will be accompanied by Charlie Chaplin's "A Dog's Life" (1918), in which that comedian's sidekick is a lovable mutt named Scraps, and Chuck Jones's animated "One Froggy Evening" (1955), a short whose talented frog doesn't hop, but hoofs. At 11 a.m., Film Forum, 209 West Houston Street, west of Avenue of the Americas, South Village, 212-727-8110, filmforum.org.

'GO OUTDOORS WITH VAN GOGH' (Saturday and Sunday) Van Gogh didn't take his inspiration from nature in the Bronx, but it will still be easy to invoke his spirit during this family art project at Wave Hill, the public garden in that borough. On Saturday and Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., this drop-in activity will lead young visitors onto the grounds, where they can use pencils and watercolor to make landscapes based on the last of summer's blooms. On Sunday only, the garden will also offer two strolls, led by the naturalist Gabriel Willow: "Fall Birding," at 9:30 a.m., recommended for ages 10 and older (with an adult), and "Family Nature Walk," at 1 p.m., recommended for ages 6 and older (with an adult). Both will offer chances to observe the garden's wild and winged residents. West 249th Street and Independence Avenue, Riverdale, 718-549-3200, wavehill.org.

'GOING PLACES — THE TECHNOLOGY OF TRANSPORT' (through Sept. 18) The journey is more important than the destination at this new exhibition at the New York Hall of Science. Celebrating the many ways we travel — and the physics and engineering that make those means possible — the show allows young visitors to play the roles of pilots, sailors, inventors and passengers. They can try out a flight simulator; test the speed of recumbent and racer bicycles; captain a tabletop yacht against high winds; try to pack a typical car trunk; and manage traffic control in a virtual city. They can also learn how engines work

and come up with their own ideas for future transport. At 47-01 111th Street, Flushing Meadows-Corona Park, Queens, 718-699-0005, nysci.org.

INSTRUMENT DISCOVERY DAY AND OPEN HOUSE (Sunday) Aspiring musicians can both try out a variety of instruments and hear them played at this free event from the Bloomingdale School of Music. Staff members will give vocal, guitar and piano performances, as well as guide children interested in lessons. Early-childhood demonstrations are new at this year's open house, which will include an opportunity to register for fall classes like *The Music in Me*, a program for 1- to 4-year-olds developed by one of the biggest stars of the preschool music scene, Laurie Berkner. From 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., 323 West 108th Street, Manhattan, 212-663-6021, bsmny.org.

'THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE' (Saturday and Monday) If the children of the Pevensie family could travel to the magical land of Narnia through something as simple as a wardrobe, why shouldn't two hard-working actors be able to play them and all the characters found there? That's what Jesse Corbin and Kelly Strandemo, who have recently joined the cast, do in the Off Broadway Family Theater's production of Le Clanché du Rand's adaptation of C.S. Lewis's classic novel. (The run is open-ended.) At 11 a.m., St. Luke's Theater, 308 West 46th Street, Clinton, 212-239-6200, narniaoffbroadway.com.

MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL AND OPEN HOUSE (Saturday) Children in the West may have heard of the Man in the Moon, but in Chinese mythology, it's a woman who lives there — along with a jade rabbit. Their stories are at the heart of the Mid-Autumn Festival, a Chinese holiday that the China Institute will celebrate at its downtown location. The free event will be filled with storytelling, children's film screenings, live music, games, lantern-making workshops and mooncakes (a traditional pastry). At 11:15 a.m. and 1:15 p.m. "Chinese for Children" will offer language lessons for ages 4 through 7. From 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., 100 Washington Street (entrance at 40 Rector Street), second floor, Lower Manhattan, 212-744-8181, chinainstitute.org.

'MISSION TO SPACE' (Thursday through Jan. 15) This season, Earth children won't have to travel far to get a taste of worlds beyond our own. The Children's Museum of the Arts is opening "Mission to Space," a new exhibition of contemporary works by adult artists who've been inspired by the space program. The pieces include Nina Katchadourian's "Asteroids," actually magnified images of popcorn; Tom Sachs's "Space Program," incorporating models of Apollo mission artifacts; and David Bowie's first music video, "Space Oddity." 103 Charlton Street, between Hudson and Greenwich Streets, South Village, 212-274-0986, cmany.org.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF MATHEMATICS: 'NUMBER PUZZLES' AND GRANDPARENTS' WEEKEND (through Sunday) How can you come up with a math program that's fun, creative and accessible to all ages? That may sound like a pretty knotty problem itself, but the National Museum of Mathematics reports that it has solved it with its free Family Fridays series. This Friday at 6:30 p.m., Dan Zaharopol, an educator and entrepreneur, will present children and adults with "Number Puzzles," creative math challenges that go beyond Sudoku and KenKen. Saturday and Sunday are also Grandparents' Weekend, when grandparents and up to two grandchildren can get free museum admission. The institution will also offer an educator-led math activity session at 11:30 a.m. or 2 p.m. each day that grandparents and their young charges can enjoy together. 11 East 26th Street, Manhattan, 212-542-0566, momath.org; all events free.

'THE PICTURE BOOK REIMAGINED: THE CHILDREN'S BOOK LEGACY OF PRATT INSTITUTE AND BANK STREET COLLEGE OF EDUCATION' (through Thursday) A good picture book is as much art as it is literature. This free exhibition examines the role of these two New York institutions in the development of this form of publishing, showcasing the contributions of their faculty members and alumni. The show, closing this week, includes original artwork and illustrated manuscripts by a variety of giants in the field, including Tomie dePaola, Arnold Lobel, Margaret Wise Brown and Eve Merriam. It also offers a reading room, a pop-up bookstore and an exhibit illustrating the full process of a book's creation: "We Are the Ship," by Kadir Nelson, a Pratt alumnus. Pratt Manhattan Gallery, 144 West 14th Street, second floor, Greenwich Village, pratt.edu/exhibitions.

'P.S. ART 2016: CELEBRATING THE CREATIVE SPIRIT OF NYC KIDS' (through Oct. 23) In this show, public school students from prekindergarten through high school achieve a distinction that some professional adult artists never do: having their work displayed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. But the Met isn't just being nice to a lot of New York City children. This exhibition, selected by a jury, consists of 89 works, in a wide range of media, selected from more than 1,200 submissions. Ruth and Harold D. Uris Center for Education, 212-535-7710, goo.gl/aw6DPQ.

THE ROCK AND ROLL PLAYHOUSE: 'CAMP BOWL: A SINGALONG WITH LISA LOEB' (Sunday) Most children aren't shy about rocking out — especially if you provide the right tunes. In Rock and Roll for Kids, a series from the Rock and Roll Playhouse geared to music fans 10 and under, young participants move, play and sing while listening to works from the classic-rock canon. This Sunday the fall season opens with the singer-songwriter Lisa Loeb, whose first big hit, "Stay (I Missed You)," was on the soundtrack for the 1994 film "Reality Bites." Here, she's celebrating her latest children's release, "Nursery Rhyme Parade." At 2 p.m., Brooklyn Bowl, 61 Wythe Avenue, between 11th and 12th Streets, Williamsburg, 718-963-3369, therockandrollplayhouse.com/brooklynbowl.

STORIES AT THE STATUE OF HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN(Saturday) Not everything that blooms perennially in Central Park is a flower or a tree. Storytelling also returns there each summer, as the city's Parks and Recreation Department, the Central Park Conservancy and the Hans Christian Andersen Storytelling Center bring narrative performers to Andersen's statue every Saturday. The free series, for ages 6 and older, is now celebrating its 60th anniversary season. The program this weekend is a celebration dedicated to the memory of Diane Wolkstein, the author and storyteller who was instrumental in founding the series. At 11 a.m., inside the park at 72nd Street and Fifth Avenue, rain or shine, hcastorycenter.org.

'A TASTE OF MAGIC' (Friday) Would you like a side of sleight of hand with that burger? This show, developed by Magnets, a collective of local magicians, brings wizardry to the dinner table. Taking place at various restaurants, the presentation includes acts like mind reading and card tricks, which professionals perform close-up for guests; there's also a cabaret-style show. And the admission price includes a full meal. At 8 p.m., Ben & Jack's Steakhouse, 255 Fifth Avenue, between 28th and 29th Streets, atasteofmagicnyc.com.

'THAT PHYSICS SHOW' (Saturday and Sunday) Dave Maiullo doesn't use cards, sleight of hand or magic wands to achieve startling effects onstage; he just relies on Newton's laws. Mr. Maiullo, for years a physics support specialist at Rutgers University, is the wizard behind this 90-minute Off Broadway show, which includes segments on motion, momentum, vacuum, friction, density and sound. Expect lots of liquid nitrogen

— and lots of surprises. (The run is open-ended.) At 3 p.m., Elektra Theater, 300 West 43rd Street, Clinton, 866-811-4111, thatphysicsshow.com.

‘WONDERS OF THE ARCTIC’ (Friday through Thursday) Baby, it’s cold up there. This new 3-D Imax film at the American Museum of Natural History explores the frozen beauty of the Arctic and how both animal species and humans have adapted to its wilderness. Directed by David Lickley, the documentary includes interviews with scientists and Inuit leaders and examines how, as climate change accelerates, this region has become as fragile as it is fierce. (Through March 2.) Hourly, from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (the 11:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. showings are not in 3-D), Central Park West and 79th Street, 212-769-5200, amnh.org.