

REGEN PROJECTS

Gardner Gray, Georgia. "Behind the Scenes With Georgia Gardner Gray at Her Madcap Performance Series in L.A.." [artnet](#) (March 10, 2025) [ill.] [online]

artnet news

People

Behind the Scenes With Georgia Gardner Gray at Her Madcap Performance Series in L.A.

The artist documents a week in her life.



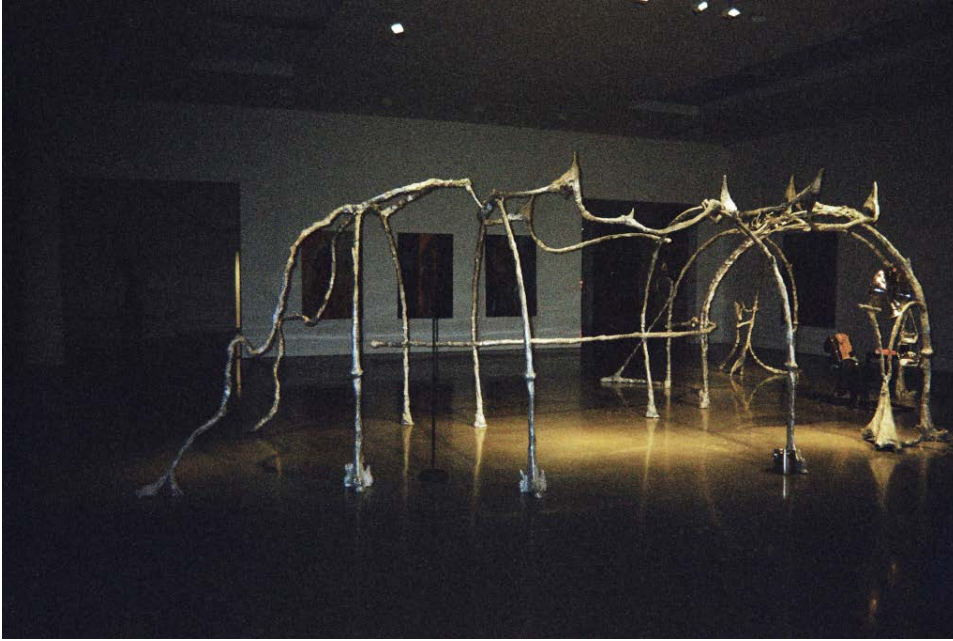
Artist Georgia Gardner Gray ahead of her performance in L.A. Courtesy of the artist

The macabre and narrative qualities of [Georgia Gardner Gray's](#) paintings were what originally got me hooked on the artist's practice when I first encountered them at Reena Spaulings about two years ago in New York. After that show, to my great delight, I learned that her darkly surrealist sensibilities extended to a sculptural and playwriting practice.

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At her new show at Regen Projects, *Chrysalis*, all three mediums are on display. Gray grabbed a couple of disposable cameras to capture the action as the performance portion debuted earlier this month. She can explain what went on there better than I can, so without further ado....

—Annie Armstrong



*Chrysalis begins....*The stage is set inside my eponymous show at Regen Projects. The cast aluminum sculpture-cum-set design has been a long time coming... Thanks to my friend Skye Chamberlain I was able to pull it off. Also shout out to Artemio Romo—the best welder in L.A. He helped us get the spikey pieces together using a leftover piece of cast aluminum chicharron from a sculpture by Max Hooper Schneider. Today we are rehearsing for the play. It has been a crazy week full of plague and pestilence, today is the first day we are actually doing a full cast rehearsal, and opening night is tomorrow!

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Stunner Sally Spitz is a musician by day, and always kills by night in her role as kooky open-mic comedian Shannon Pot. Artist and Gaylord Fine Arts proprietor Joseph Geagan watches on, playing a 1950's late night show host and merciless roaster.



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Artist and musician Negashi Armada is a natural comedian. Playing an Amazon delivery guy in the first two acts, he brings the play to a final climax when he is chosen as a contestant on a comedy show and delivers his routine about having a crush on Anne Frank. The rehearsal goes great, everyone is getting amped!



Opening night is upon us!! I show up and immediately pop champagne, Joseph is happy.



The champagne attracts fellow gadflys! Here is Anthony Salvador, director at Regen Projects, looking dashing as always in his suit. Actor and writer Graydon Miller, who plays fourth-wall-shattering open-mic comedian Mr.G, is on point and already in costume! His routine, fittingly, revolves around fishing.

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My favorite people start showing up! Here is artist Kate Douvan, Max Pitegoff of New Theater Hollywood, Tyler Murphy of Commercial Street Gallery/ Hannah Hoffman, my trusted collaborator Skye Chamberlain of D.o.o.R, and furniture designer Andy Roy. The excitement is palpable!



More friends Alex Goodman and Gillian Steiner look fab with the usual lurkers in the back! A generous pour for Gillian—give it up for those bartenders at Regen Projects!

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Backstage, the Amish are in costume! Act Two features an Amish couple as they try to understand 'English' humor. Actors Tom Worth and Phoebe Grant enjoy a cup of tea to calm their nerves. Phoebe has a big monologue coming up! (which she kills) I think we may have found ourselves the next Kirsten Dunst...



Joseph and artist Veronica Gelbaum aka "Greenberg" are co hosts on a comedy show. Greenberg may look sweet and innocent in this picture but she will haunt your dreams with her Joan Rivers inspired roasts!

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The crowd has assembled-and it was totally packed!! No more time for fun and games. 7PM show time baby!!!!



Full cast huddle! I try to lighten the mood a bit as nerves run high! This is such a special, cool, hilarious group of people—I am feeling so lucky to be in their midst.

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Musician Harmony Tividad takes the stage as a make-up youtube influencer who hasn't left the house in months. This part of the play is adapted from Ionesco's *'How to Get Rid of It'*, where a bourgeois couple harbors a bloating, rotting corpse in their back bedroom that is causing mushrooms to sprout uncontrollably in their apartment. In the original play, the character is a telephone operator, so it seemed fitting that she should transform into a youtube influencer. She received an applause break after her unhinged 'get ready with me' monologue, it was totally electric!!



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Phoebe Grant plays Eliza, an Amish girl with big dreams of doing stand up comedy. She has a long monologue debating with God whether or not she should be allowed to pursue her dreams, or if she is submitting to *'the pull of the English and their trifle horse FAME'*.



Joseph and Greenberg (Veronica Gelbaum) take the stage advertising nicotine toothpicks and online therapy between dated jokes. Joseph asks the audience, “Are you ready for the best damn night of your life?!!” I can’t speak for anyone else, but for me this night ranked right up there. And at this point it isn’t even over!! I won’t bore you with more blurry performance photos—you will have to just take my word for it!

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And boom!! Thunderous applause and some bad-joke groans later, we land at the afterparty. It's just down the street at what is reportedly Morrissey's favorite Irish pub The Cat and the Fiddle. Renaissance Man Negashi Armada on the left with his friend Solando Candy getting the party started!



Anna Frost, Liz Lee, Pedro Bello, Negashi, and Veronica in full fete mode. We ate fish and chips, scotch eggs, shepherd's pie, and drank margaritas... a great combo!!

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Miggi Hood, Kristin Palmer, and le Skye having a drink with my Mallorcan sweetie of over 5 years, Horacio Alcolea Crespo. I have Horacio to thank for many of the pics in this diary- I love you Horacio!!



Actor and artist Tom Worth plays a poetic young Amish man in the play. A charming Texan, his real life affect is not far off target. Here he is with his gorgeous girlfriend Bella Wayans. They are so in love! This party was full of lovers, and they made the vibes really good.

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OoooH!! Time for a Guinness indeed!! Little old me with LA's queen herself, Shaun Regen with LA's Princess, Jasmine Johnson- and King of the Gaylords Joseph Geagan. Can a photo be more iconic? Jasmine and Joseph introduced me to many of the actors in the play as they really do have their finger on the pulse of those Los Angeles streets. We have the lifeblood of L.A. in this picture people!! We are not messing around here!!!

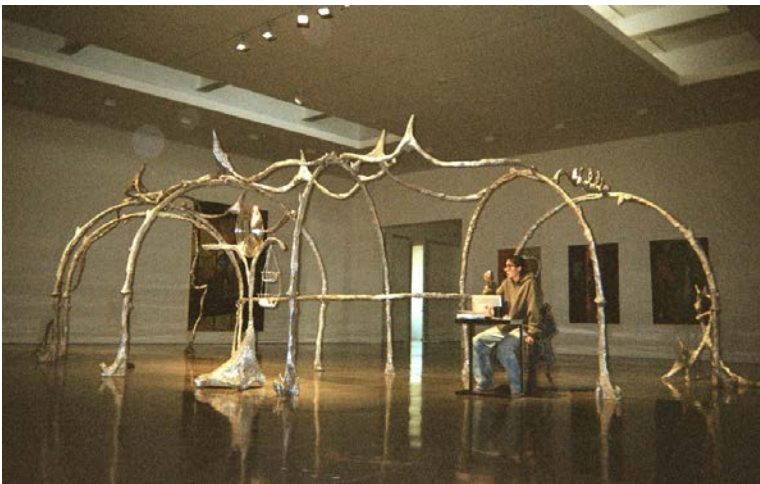


Shaun's sequin jacket is particularly jaunty on disposable film!! I came out back to the rowdy patio and immediately was asked to give a speech! Ay caramba!! They politely clapped after some blabber.

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And we are back on that trifle horse baby!!! We had a matinee the next day. A nice crowd turned up through Oscar's traffic to see our play. This keystone cop directed an endless flow of suburbans up towards the Dolby Theater right across the street from the gallery.



As riot police ran by on Santa Monica Boulevard towards the protesting Palestinians, artist Liz Lee starts the play sitting on a mushroom. Her character Taylor laments her writer's block and constantly pleads for attention from her partner Danielle. The only thing she can seem to get out are sentences that begin with "The old man and the old woman...."

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All the cutest guys from Sal's Place showed up to the Matinee. John Tuite from the Gaylord, Sam Zimman and Joe Schaefer came by on their day off.



Legendary artist Cathy Opie stopped by and proved not only to be a fantastic artist but a very funny comedian.

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This set piece was designed as a stand-in for the influencer's camera lens. Cathy grabbed the real camera and snapped this pic of me behind it! According to her and Shaun, this is how people feel after taking a hit of Cathy's notoriously strong joints. My weed smoking days are thankfully behind me 🙄

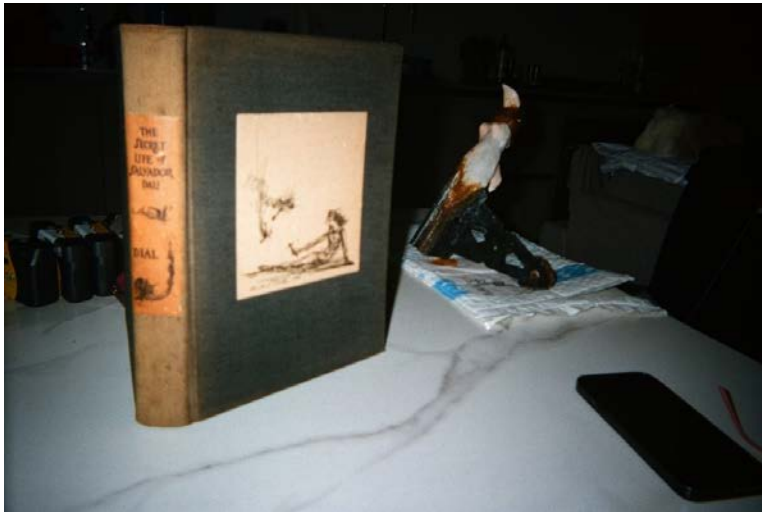


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Yes, ladies and gentleman, we went straight to Canter's for Bloody Mary's, chopped liver and latkes before the cast party.



That was one grumpy waitress but she did take our photo, bless her.



Shaun and I were looking through her library and came across this first edition of the *Secret Life of Salvador Dali*. This very entertaining autobiography totally turned me onto Dali's work. Like a butterfly in a Chrysalis, I have left the Warhol paradigm and am emerging into my Dalinian Era. The Chrysalis, after all, was first made by Dali in the 50's as an advertisement for Gala's favorite sedative, which I am sure played an important role in their relationship.

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On with the Paranoiac Critical Method- iykyk. Shaun knows I am obsessed with this book and gifted it to me on the spot. It is now one of my most cherished possessions. Thank you Shaun for everything! My show Chrysalis is up in LA at Regen Projects until March 29th- AND We will be back doing the play again on March 29th at 1pm, 4pm, and 7pm! You do not want to miss it!!
xGGG