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Nov 20. Tue-Fri, noon-7pm, Sat, noon-5pm. San Jose.

**ART ARK**

"Modified." A group show by artists using found materials. Thru Oct 29. San Jose.

**DOWNTOWN YOGA SHALA**

Works by Nancy Lober. Thru Oct 29. San Jose.

**FILOLI**

"San Francisco Bay Area Wildlife: Beautiful, Vital, Fragile." A photo exhibit. Thru Oct 24. Tue-Sat, 10am-3:30pm, Sun, 11am-3:30pm. Woodside.

**HIGHER FIRE CLAYSPACE & GALLERY**

"Three for All." Works by clay artists Liz Burkhouse, Cindy Couling and Janet Starr. Thru Nov 4. San Jose.

**KALEID GALLERY**

"Ancient Art, Modern Twist." Paintings by Mariana Barnes. "Italy Today." Photos by John Eric Paulson. Thru Oct 31. San Jose.

**KAVLI INSTITUTE FOR PARTICLE ASTROPHYSICS**

A display of 19 works, including the "Galactic Mysteries" series, by Leah Lubin. SLAC National Accelerator Lab, Stanford.

**MACLA**

"Lines: New Modes of Contemporary Urbanism." An exploration of globalism and localism with works by Tanya Aguiniga and Teddy Cruz. Thru Oct 16. San Jose.

**THE MAIN GALLERY**

"Songs of Silence." Photos by Arup Biswas. "Bird Song." Sculpture, painting and mixed media by Nina Koepcke, Susan Wolf and others. Thru Oct 17. Reception Oct 9, 6-9pm. Wed-Sun, 10am-3pm. Redwood City.

**MONTALVO ARTS CENTER**

"Human Nature." Works about our relationships with animals. Thru Oct 17. "Ode to Montalvo" by Ann Weber (ends Oct 31) and "From Within, So Without" by Ali Maschke-Messing (ends Jun 30). Saratoga.

**PALO ALTO ART CENTER**

"In Focus" Collecting Photography." "Light From the Underground," a photographic essay about mining in South Wales by Colette Campbell-Jones. "Paintings From Haiti." Thru Dec

12. Tue-Sat, 10am-5pm, Sun, 1-5pm, and Tue-Thu, 7-10pm. Palo Alto.

**SAN JOSE CITY HALL**

Murals from the Golden Gate Exposition by Miguel Covarrubias. City Hall Wing, San Jose.

**SAN JOSE INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART**

Annual Art Exhibition and Auction. To celebrate the 30th anniversary of the gallery. Show runs through live auction on Oct 23. Tue-Fri, 10am-5pm, Sat, noon-6pm. Open late first Friday of the month. San Jose.

**SJSU STUDENT GALLERIES**

Works by Erin Salazar, Paul Yula, Rod Ayers and others in various galleries. Thru Oct 8. SJSU Art Building.

**SLG ART BOUTIKI**

"Eyaaaaaah!! Monsters!" Pieces in a beastly vein by James Brunner, John Hastings and Drew Rausch. Thru Oct 29. San Jose.

**STANFORD ART SPACES**

Photographs by Ken Holden, paintings by Gianna Marino, Nearl Boor and Pat Sherwood. Thru Oct 28. Weekdays, 8:30am-5pm. Stanford campus.

**Books****LAN SAMANTHA CHANG**

A reading by novelist. Sponsored by the Center for Literary Arts at SJSU. Wed, 7pm. Free. (Chang also appears Thu, 7pm, at Kepler's Menlo Park.) King Main Library, San Jose.

**STEVEN JOHNSON**

A talk with author of "Where Good Ideas Come From." Sun, 2pm. Free. Kepler's, Menlo Park.

**MICHELLE NORRIS**

The "All Things Considered" co-host and author of "The Grace of Silence" talks about her memoir on race. Thu, 7pm. Free. Student Union, SJSU.

**kids****MISS NELSON IS MISSING**

Presented by California Theatre Center. Sat, 11am (also Oct 16). \$11/\$12. Sunnyvale Community Center Theater.

**PUMPKINS IN THE PARK**

A pumpkin patch plus and kids'

entertainers Zun Zun, Andy Z and more designed to get families primed for Halloween. Sat, 10am-4pm. Free. W. San Carlos Street and Woz Way, San Jose.

**RAPUNZEL**

A family show by Palo Alto Children's Theatre. Sat, 10am and noon. \$5/\$10. Lucie Stern Theatre, Palo Alto.

**STORY TIME**

With Lemony Snicket reading from "13 Words" and Lisa Brown reading from "Vampire Boy's Good Night." Sun, 11am. Free. Kepler's, Menlo Park.

**GIOVANNI TEMPESTA**

The Stanford poet and classics scholar reads from his new book of poems, "Acque, Lululente E Chiare: Waters, Muddy and Clear." Mon, 7pm. Free. Kepler's, Menlo Park.

**events****Big Deals****DIWALI FESTIVAL**

An Indian festival of lights. Sat, 10am-6pm. Free. De Anza College, Cupertino.

**ITALIA, MUSICA, ITALIA**

A celebration of 15th season of Mission Chamber Orchestra and 150th anniversary of modern Italy. With music, buffet dinner and auction. Sat, 6pm. \$18-\$30. Italian-American Heritage Foundation (425 N. Fourth St), San Jose.

**RAINBOW WOMEN'S CHORUS FLEA MARKET**

A fundraiser for the choral group. Sat, 8am-4pm. Christ the Good Shepherd Church parking Lot (on Meridian), San Jose.

**RENAISSANCE FAIRE**

Travel to the Elizabethan era. Sat-Sun, 10am-6pm. Runs thru Oct 17. Casa de Fruta, Hollister.

**STRIKEFORCE**

Josh Thomson vs. JZ Cavalcante; Nick Diaz vs. KJ Noons. Sat, 7pm. \$31 and up. HP Pavilion, San Jose.

**WORLD HOMELESS DAY**

Singer/songwriter Michelle Chappel performs to aid World Homeless Organization. Sun, 11am-3pm. Santana Row, San Jose.



STAGE

**EN GARDE** *The course of true love is a bit contentious in 'The Fantasticks.'*

**Romantic Quest**

**O**NE CAN'T help having feelings of apprehension when a play titled *The Fantasticks*. However, it has been running off-Broadway since 1960, so expectations can be tossed out the window. Tom Jones (not the one you're thinking of) and Harvey Schmidt take cues from Rostand's *Les Romanesques* in this two-act musical comedy, currently playing at the Retro Dome.

In any given generation, kids do the opposite of what their parents tell them to do. Naive 16-year-old Luisa (Ashely Rae Little) and still-wet-behind-the-ears Matt (Frankie Mulcahy) are rapt with teenage love. Their disapproving mothers, Bellomy (Linda Covington) and Hucklebee (Linda Piccone), have built a wall (played by Isai Centeno—you read right, the wall is a mute character) between the neighboring lovers.

The hatred between the two mothers is just a fabrication; they only act like enemies to encourage the budding relationship. They concoct a plan and stage a fake abduction of Luisa, so Matt can heroically rescue her to prove his worth and bring the families together. The mothers get in touch with El Gallo (Stephen Guggenheim), a villainous rogue, who enlists the help of Henry (Jerry McAllister), an aging actor with delusions of grandeur, and Mortimer (Richard Sanchez), an actor only known for his dying scenes. The plan goes off without a hitch and the first act ends on a high note.

A sense of reality comes into play by the second act. What started out as a light-hearted, sometimes silly love story turns into a sobering drama. The wall is torn down. Matt realizes he hasn't even seen the world. Luisa is disillusioned because Matt doesn't seem to be the knight in shining armor she'd always dreamed of. The mothers fight about how to keep the garden they now share. The couple break up and learn what the real world is all about.

On the surface, *The Fantasticks* might be dismissed as outdated. And in some ways, it is. It takes the basic boy-meets-girl, boy-loses-girl formula and adds a couple of throwaway songs and corny humor (although there were times when I was the only one laughing in the theater). But by the end, there was a real message of how reality can wreak havoc on fantasy. The end result is never how it was anticipated. Your boyfriend makes gross noises. Your girlfriend has flaws. People can be deceptive and growing up also means growing wise.—*Beau Dowling*

**The Fantasticks**

Through Oct 24  
The Retro Dome,  
San Jose