

Get Out

The week's pocket picks

By SAMANTHA SAULT

Theater

Hal Holbrook in 'Mark Twain Tonight!'

Which historical figure would you invite to your imaginary dinner party? Abraham Lincoln? Princess Diana? How about Mark Twain, the great American author known for his biting wit? This weekend, you can see what it would be like to spend an evening with the prolific author and humorist during actor Hal Holbrook's renowned show, "Mark Twain Tonight!" While studying at Denison University, Mr. Holbrook discovered he could impersonate Mr. Twain quite well, and in 1954, he launched a one-man show in nightclubs in New York City to support his family. After Ed Sullivan discovered him and put him on television a year later, Mr. Holbrook soon had an off-Broadway hit, a world tour sponsored by the State Department, a Tony Award, and a CBS TV special. He's performed his shtick for 60 years now, and this weekend, his new tour stops for two nights at the National Theatre. **Friday and Saturday at the National Theatre, 1321 Pennsylvania Ave. NW. 202/628-6161. Web: thenationaldc.org.**



Nightlife

Toro Toro Grand Opening Party

International restaurateur Richard Sandoval has made a name for himself in Washington with his Latin fusion restaurants Zengo, Masa 14, and two locations of El Centro. Last Monday, a fourth concept joined the list — Toro Toro, a Pan Latin steakhouse that's heaven for carnivores with meats and seafood served churrasco-style at your table along with an extensive tapas menu. Designed by a Dubai design firm, the restaurant is sure to become a new hot spot for dinner and late night, with colorful, modern décor and dim lighting, as well as plans for after-dinner dance parties in the 5,000 square foot lounge. On Saturday, celebrate the opening until the early hours of the morning (and pretend you're on spring break) with electronic DJ and producer Robbie Rivera, who frequently mixes his house beats in Miami and Ibiza. **Saturday at Toro Toro, 1300 I St. NW. 202/905-5337. Web: richardsandoval.com or robbierivera.wanttickets.com.**





Pick of the pack

Exhibit

Visions from the Forests: The Art of Liberia & Sierra Leone

Last week, the United Nations formally ended 15 years of peacekeeping and nation-building in Sierra Leone, which had been ravaged by a decade of civil war. While the West African nation still has a long path to development, U.N. officials praised “remarkable achievements” there as they officially shut down the effort. This week, the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African Art debuts an exhibit devoted to the traditional art of Sierra Leone and neighboring Liberia. Opening Wednesday, the exhibit features pieces collected by the late William Siegmann, a scholar who was equally devoted to developing peace in the region. Siegmann lived in Liberia as a member of the Peace Corps and as a professor at a small university, and served as the curator of African and Pacific Islands art at the Brooklyn Museum until his death in 2011. His collection includes numerous masks and body ornaments, divination figures, and other ritual objects as well as textiles and jewelry from the 15th through 18th centuries. Next Sunday, April 13, the museum’s deputy director and chief curator, Christine Mullen Kreamer, will lead a tour of the exhibit. **Through Aug. 17 at the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, 950 Independence Ave. SW. 202/633-4600. Web: africa.si.edu.**

Festival

Shakespeare's Birthday Open House

April marks the birth and the death of William Shakespeare — and this year, his 450th birthday, he deserves an extra-large slice of cake. From “Hamlet” and “Macbeth” to “Romeo and Juliet” and countless sonnets, no writer has had a greater impact on the English language, and the Folger Shakespeare Library is paying tribute with a blowout birthday bash. On Sunday, the Folger will host a free open house, with fun for the entire family. Enjoy Shakespearean entertainment, like jugglers, jesters, singers, dancers, fortune tellers, and storytellers, as well as workshops on the art of stage combat with the Folger’s fight choreographer. Take a scholarly look at the Bard’s works during discussions with Folger staff and scholars, or tour the reading rooms, which are rarely open to the public. And, of course, enjoy short performances of some of his most beloved works. If you get hungry, several food trucks will be on the premises — and Queen Elizabeth I, his patron, will serve birthday cake to all. **Sunday from noon to 4 p.m. at the Folger Shakespeare Library, 201 East Capitol St. SE. 202/544-4600. Web: folger.edu.**



Theater

Moth

Between school pressures, peer pressure and puberty, high school can be tough — and these days, with social media and cellphones, the conversation about the long-term and sometimes tragic effects of bullying is all the more important. On Wednesday, the Studio Theatre will open the U.S. premiere of a drama that explores the struggles faced by adolescents who refuse to conform. “Moth,” by young Australian playwright Declan Greene, tells the story of two 15-year-olds, Sebastian, who is teased for his love of anime, and his friend Claryssa, a Wicca-practicing emo, and how they band together to try to survive high school. Following a bullying incident on the school’s athletic field, Sebastian begins having hallucinations about the apocalypse — and a mental breakdown. Part of the Studio Theatre’s 2ndStage program to support emerging playwrights, the play is dark and humorous, and an important exploration of friendship, loss, bullying and mental illness among teenagers. **Through May 4 at the Studio Theatre, 1501 14th St. NW. 202/332-3300. Web: studiotheatre.org.**