Pop Art Design

Barbican Art Gallery, London
Studio 80’s star-and-stripes “Leopardo” sofa, Claus Oldenburg’s latex “London Knees”, Warhol’s jeans-clad male crotch with working zipper for the Rolling Stones’ Sticky Fingers album, Richard Hamilton’s fibreglass “Gold Gigglenham”, Tom Wesselmann’s painting “Smoker Banner”: here is another fresh take on Pop, exploring its long reach into design. Well-known paintings and sculpture are also included in a massive overview dramatising how Pop’s focus on celebrity, mass production and advertising transformed western cultural identity. barbican.org.uk/gallery, to February 9

Masterpieces of Chinese Painting
Victoria and Albert Museum, London
A once-in-a-generation show tracing the evolution across more than a millennium of one of the world’s greatest artistic traditions. How it was upheld and reinvigorated by the different demands of painting for temples, palaces, homes and gardens, in formats ranging from handheld fans to a 34-metre scroll. Most works are visiting Europe for the first time.

When Britain Went Pop!
Chiswick, London
In 1957, Richard Hamilton presciently defined pop art as “popular, transient, expendable, low cost, mass produced, young, witty, sexy, gimmicky, glamorous, big business”. That famous description was right in every respect except that the art proved the opposite: transient. No postwar movement has been more influential. Pop also became bigger business than anyone could have imagined — thus Christie’s choice to launch its luxurious new Mayfair gallery with a charismatic show devoted to the early years of British pop. London’s first comprehensive exhibition on the subject, it is both a perfect distillation of this period and fascinatingly unfamiliar because the majority of pieces — well over a hundred — come from private collections. Many belong to the artists and are studies for or unknown versions of acclaimed works, including Hamilton’s “Study for Hommage a Chevalier Corb”, and “Swinging London 67 (a)”, and David Hockney’s “First Love Painting”, an oil and pencil sketch for “We Two Boys Together”. (1966)

Clinging”, paintings in the Egyptian series (“Kasir eel stroiling in Alexandria with small stain on character”) stunning “Swimming” There are 18 artists to the show, and a rich jumbled hang represents

Louise Bourgeois: A Woman Without Secrets
Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh
Secrets were precisely what Bourgeois’ art lived off — her autobiographical oeuvre returns repeatedly to family deceptions, woven into formal, richly mixed media sculptures “Colls” installations like forms references “venezia” and “Dee of the Father” series “Spider” pieces. This dramatic exhibition includes a “Spider” & “Spinal Woman” from Louise Bourgeois Foundation in New York, significant works from all in a donation from the artist Rooms collection, notably late monumental drawings and the artist’s.final vitrine, and Tate loans. nationalgalleries.org 0131 624 6200, from today to May 18

Paul Klee: Making Visible
Tate Modern, London
Small, luminous canvases, as diverse as the theatrical sprinkled-colour-on-black aquarium “Fish Magic”, a colorful purple/orange abstract cityscape “Architecture” and the satirical “Man of the Future” proclam Klee one of modern art’s greatest individualists. This clear, strong show demonstrates how he assimilated French cubism and Bauhaus constructivism into a late flowering of German romanticism. tate.org.uk 020 7887 8888, to March 9

Raw Truth: Auerbach — Rembrandt
Orford, London
Auerbach has been reviewing Rembrandt for 40 years. The fourth in Ordovas’s series juxtaposing old and new masters invites consideration of influence and continuity, with examples of landscape, portrait, and interior with figures by each artist. This is a small, focused show in which each work rewards long, slow looking; it is a particular delight to see reunited Auerbach’s three early 1990s canvases depicting “Primrose Hill” in spring, summer, and autumn sunshine. orfordarts.org 020 7887 5013, to December 1

Dance

Clement Crisp

Rambert/hofesh shechter
Sadler’s Wells, London
The weekend begins with the final performances by Rambert at Sadler’s Wells today of a triple bill offering Mark Baldwin’s The Comedy of Change with new ballet by Ashley Page and Barak Marshall. Then on Wednesday — and on show until November 3 — Hofesh Shechter brings a new staging, Sun, to the venue, featuring what the seasonal brochure identifies as his “raw, honest choreography” and “highly charged, atmospheric scores”. For strangers to Wells speak mean “high-energy and loud noise”. sadlerswells.co.uk 020 787 0899

English National Ballet
Various venues
Le Corsaire, in English National Ballet’s new staging (pictured), is a more-than-lively survival from a century and a half of performance in Russia. This version has splattered scenery, a pretty score, a seriously wacky narrative that someone once based on Byron’s poem, and lots of dances for pirouettes, harems, girls, classical danseuses and assorted and fetchingly costumed others. I thought it both fun and worth your money — though please do not puzzle your heads over the story. On view in Southampton’s Mayflower Theatre today and, at the New Theatre, Oxford, from October 30 to November 2. mayflower.org.uk 023 807 1411

BLAM!
Sadler’s Wells, London
I can offer few insights into this staging by the Scandinavian troupe Neander, save that it involves what the publicity calls “breakdown stunts and breathtaking physical feats” and concerns office workers trying to escape their daily routine. In November 16. Details as above