

THE GUIDE: EVENT

The Good of having intersections in L.A.

As the socially minded media company sets up shop here, it aims to bring people together in this notoriously spread-apart city.

By Margaret Wappler
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Andy Warhol, Malcolm Forbes and Jackie O all recognized the power of a well-curated party. And so does Good co-founder and community director Max Schorr, albeit in a low-key, anti-glitterati way befitting the socially conscious media company that publishes Good magazine.

A magazine and media company dedicated to “people who want to live well and do good,” according to its mission statement, Good has hosted public events in New York, San Francisco, Chicago and L.A. But these aren’t smarmy opportunities for Schorr or company Chairman Ben Goldhirsh to gladhand with potential advertisers -- they’re more about community in action.

“The parties are about energizing the concept of ‘good,’ “ Schorr says. “We want to make it more fun.”

Last December Good set up a pop-up community center in New York focusing on themes such as media, environment and technology, with most events curated by Good and some by local individuals and companies. Immediately, Schorr and staffers Kyla Fullenwider and Jennifer Su had the idea to bring it to L.A., but they wanted to make the concept less ephemeral and place it more in the hands of the people.

Now they have a permanent space at their new, lightly mod L.A. office on Melrose Avenue, and they’re breaking it in with a month of events: Friday to Dec. 19, the Good space will host readings, discussions, dinners, screenings and other opportunities for Angelenos to cross paths. The space will also be open every day, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., with free snacks and drinks, wi-fi, a book exchange, a clothing drop, games and other small touches conducive to chilling out.

“This is really an experiment to connect people in L.A.,” Schorr says.

And like any experiment, there’s a wild-card factor. “We’re not sure how L.A. will respond to this,” Fullenwider says. “It’s such a culturally rich city, but it’s not interacting or pollinating enough. So we’re providing a platform. That’s when the good stuff happens -- when a filmmaker can talk to an environmentalist or a politician with a designer.”

Half of December’s events are curated by Good; the other ideas are from the community. Good’s December sponsors act more as collaborators, Schorr says; JetBlue, for instance, will host a volunteer day on Dec. 13. The Los Angeles Times Media Group is also a sponsor.

The space is about 2,000 square feet, including an outdoor area, with a few choice architectural details, like a sliding blue door from architect Barbara Bestor, author of “Bohemian Modern.” Bestor will also be part of “Good Design: LA” at the space on Dec. 18, a discussion with designers presenting solutions to local design conundrums.

Other events include a Dead Author reading Friday from 826LA; the Local World's Fair, an alternative to Black Friday-style shopping, on Saturday and Sunday; and a dinner conversation with Michael Hebb on L.A.'s formidable transportation troubles on Wednesday.

At the end of December, Schorr, Fullenwider and Su will regroup and figure out the direction for the space in 2009. "For now, we want to learn what works," Fullenwider says, "but we're open to suggestions."

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