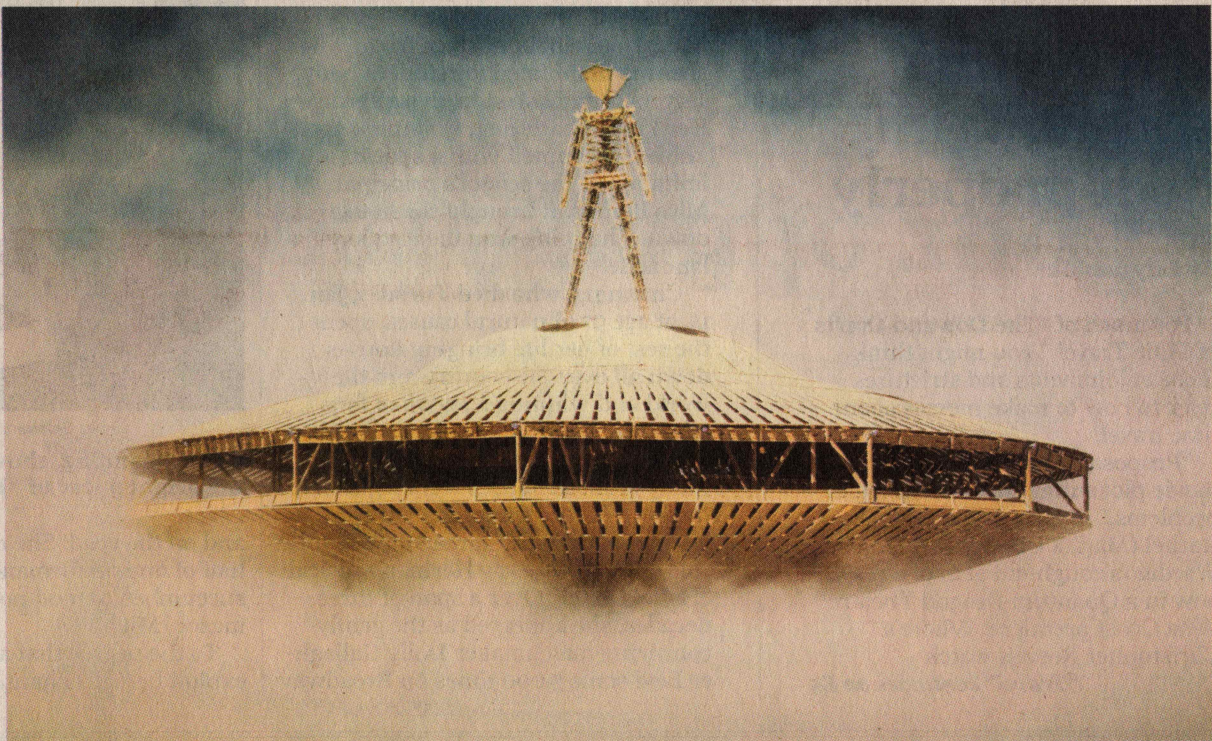




Scott London / Stanford University

A symposium at the de Young Museum will consider the artistic and cultural impacts of Burning Man.

Burning Man stirs scholars

By Charles Desmarais

When the scholars get hold of a counter-cultural phenomenon, does that signal its impending end?

There will be an opportunity to assess that matter when the Bill Lane Center for the American West, a research institute at Stanford University, presents "Burning Man: Art and Technology," a two-hour symposium on the festival of creativity and free-spirited

Burning Man: Art and Technology: 2-4 p.m. Feb. 23. Free (advance reservation required). Koret Auditorium, de Young Museum, 50 Hagiwara Tea Garden Drive, S.F. 650-721-1588. <https://stanford.io/2DauHgS>

fellowship that attracts thousands to the Nevada desert at the end of August for a multiday campout. The program, scheduled for Feb. 23, will be hosted at the de Young Museum, an event co-sponsor.

Speakers include Nora Atkinson, a curator at the Smithsonian Institution's Renwick Gallery, who organized last year's blockbuster exhibition "No Spectators: The Art of Burning Man"; Katherine K. Chen, a sociologist at the City College of New York who has studied the festival; Scott London, a Bay Area photographer who has delved deeply into the Burning Man phenomenon; and Fred Turner, a Stanford professor of communi-

cations who will deliver the keynote talk, "What Burning Man Does for Silicon Valley."

Admission is free, but — just like the Burning Man event itself — you'll have to register in advance. Fire dancing, presumably, will not be allowed in the museum auditorium.

Charles Desmarais is The San Francisco Chronicle's art critic. Email: cdesmarais@sfgchronicle.com