

20 days & 20 nights

Now in its sixth year, the arts festival shows no sign of stopping

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For some, fall means sweaters, crunchy leaves underfoot and apple cider. But for others, fall means something completely different – the fall arts season. Dance, film, music – the hazy days of summer give way to a bountiful feast of performing arts.

In Cincinnati, this autumnal cornucopia of culture gets off to a start with the 20 Days and 20 Nights Festival of Arts and Culture, Enjoy the Arts/START's annual arts celebration. This year, 20/20 stretches from Sept. 28 to Oct. 17.

"It's a celebration of our local arts, homegrown here in Cincinnati," says Kristin Suess, the festival's coordinator. "It's also the unofficial kickoff for the fall arts season – a lot of the different performing groups start their seasons in the fall, so it's great to link up a celebratory event with what are often the first shows of the season."

With 65 events (over half of which are free) happening in 27 neighborhoods, it's not easy to narrow down the list, but Suess mentions five that are definitely worth checking out.



Ever dreamed of spending the night on a pirate ship? You can (sort of) with a special overnight event happening at Cincinnati Museum Center.

JUST THE FACTS

WHAT: 20 Days and 20 Nights Festival of Arts and Culture

WHEN: Sept. 28-Oct. 17

WHERE: Various venues throughout the region

PRICE: Prices vary; more than half of the events are free

CONTACT: 513-621-4700, www.20days20nights.com or www.etastart.com

FIVE SHOWS TO CHECK OUT

20/20 KICKOFF

6 p.m. Friday, Sept. 28
 Enjoy the Arts/START,
 1338 Main St., Over-the-Rhine
 Free

SUESS: "According to tradition, we'll kick off on Final Friday. Enjoy the Arts offices are on Main Street, so we're starting it off in our own neighborhood. A few special performing groups will do street performances, and the galleries are going to be open. The Art Academy is doing a special exhibit, and Urban Appalachian Council will be doing a special performance of their Humor Fest 2007 at Gabriel's Corner. Also, Ensemble Theater is doing a special show of *Rabbit Hole* with their interns doing an abbreviated performance after their full performance.

"You could come down to Main Street and not spend a dime. It's MidPoint Music Festival on Main Street, as well, so there's going to be a lot going on the street. It's going to be a really happening, fun time!"

PATH: JOURNEY OF INDIA

11:30 a.m. Sunday, Sept. 30
 Hebrew Union College,
 3101 Clifton Ave.,
 University Heights
 \$10-\$15

SUESS: "For those who want to learn something with their art experience, there is a presentation going to be made called PATH: Journey of India. A couple of the India cultural dance organizations received a grant to put together a multimedia presentation that explores the history of India, which is celebrating its 60th anniversary of independence.

"We teamed them up with the Ethics Center at the Hebrew Union College - independence is something that's universal. Afterwards, the Hebrew Union College will be doing a special tour of their exhibit *Mapping Our Tears*. It's a chance to learn something about India from artists that are based here and are passionate about their country of origin, and have a wonderful experience spanning the different ideas of what it means to be independent and free."



Dancers from NrityArpana and Tribhanga will present a program exploring the history of India on Sunday at Hebrew Union College.

ARTS AND EATS

Noon to 1 p.m. Monday-Thursday
 Oct. 1-4
 Fountain Square,
 Fifth and Vine streets, downtown
 Free

SUESS: "It's going to be a variety of free events. We've teamed up with groups to have some kind of presentation on the square. A lot of times it's interactive, sometimes it's just people coming and being able to check out some art for the day. So we encourage people to get out of the office and stop by the square, see what's going on."

"It's one of the things we started with one of the earlier festivals, but for the past couple of years we haven't been able to do it due to the construction of Fountain Square, so it makes its 'triumphant return' to the festival."

CELESTIAL CONUNDRUM

7 and 9:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 5
 Cincinnati Observatory Center,
 3489 Observatory Place,
 Hyde Park
 \$15-\$20

SUESS: "Conundrum Music is a group that focuses on chamber music, but specifically chamber music that doesn't often get played - it may be a little different or not that well-known for whatever reason. They like to do interesting music in interesting spaces, so in

keeping with that, they're doing an event called Celestial Conundrum and it is going to be at the Observatory.

"They're going to involve a bunch of different artists performing ... and there will be folks from the Observatory on hand to give a tour of the facility. So you kind of get a two-for-one."

ARR! A PIRATE LIFE FOR ME!

7 p.m. Friday-
 Saturday morning, Oct. 12-13
 Cincinnati Museum Center,
 1301 Western Ave., Queensgate
 \$30

SUESS: "We've teamed up with the Cincinnati Museum Center - it's their *Real Pirates* exhibit. It's an overnight, and there are two different demographics that it's geared toward - families with their kids, and those with a 'kid within,' who may not have a kid to bring. We're going to be making an effort to group like-aged people, so if you're a YP who wants to get in on the pirate fun, you'll be grouped with other YPs for the activities that are going to be happening.

"There's going to be a breakfast served in the morning, and the price includes a ticket to see the exhibition *Real Pirates*. It should be a fun pirate immersion for people who want to 'jump on board!'"