

The 2014 FotoFocus Biennial is a month-long series of photography based events and exhibitions taking place throughout Cincinnati.

7 Reasons To FotoFocus

By Leah Zipperstein | Published: Oct 7, 2014



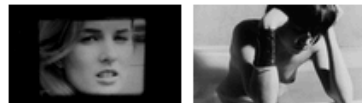
Sometimes it's hard to describe our feelings. That's why songs resonate with the soul. For whatever reason, as I sat down to write this FotoFocus preview, the song that popped into my head is "[We've Only Just Begun](#)" by The Carpenters.



VIEW GALLERY:



*We've only just begun to live
White lace and promises
A kiss for luck and we're on our way
We've only begun*



Now, if that doesn't set the mood, well then, I don't know what will. In all seriousness, we have only just begun. Although the

2014 FotoFocus experience started at the beginning of the month, the real meat of the biennial event takes place this week (Oct. 8-12).

Hold up, what's FotoFocus you ask? Alright, alright. I'll take a step back. To paraphrase the FotoFocus Facebook page (which sums it up pretty darn well): FotoFocus is a non-profit arts organization whose mission is to present outstanding historical and contemporary photography and produce programs that are both intellectually stimulating and accessible to a large and diverse public.

The first ever FotoFocus event took place in October 2012. For this year's production, Kevin Moore (who is based in New York & kind of a big deal) has been brought on board as the Artistic Director to curate the Featured Exhibitions. To put it lightly, this isn't your brother's senior art project.

We're happy to present 7 Reasons To FotoFocus:

1. A Picture Is Worth A Thousand Words

Photos are universal. And they always have been. But now, in the 21st century of smartphones and Instagram, they are one of the quickest and clearest forms of communication. Cameras reside in our pockets. We take pictures on the daily. (Some of us on the double, triple daily.) We do this because pictures say things that words can't. That's what FotoFocus is all about: creating a dialogue through images.

2. It'll Make You Smarter. ... Maybe

Art, smart, right? Sure, I enjoy going to an art museum. But if I had my choice, I'd likely prefer to consume a TV show and watch my mind turn to mush. Thankfully, FotoFocus can offer the mental escape that my mind seeks without the candy-crushing devastation of those guilty pleasures. Back to point number one --> of photos being universal. That means anyone and everyone can digest the contents of a photo. You don't need a goofy headset to learn about some Renaissance painter. (No offense, Botticelli.) These are pictures. We all love pictures.

3. Participation Is Welcome (& Encouraged)

You can't really have a photo exhibit in this day and age without asking the patrons to snap a few of their own pics. Cue the Fotogram Art Hub at Washington Park. Designed by architect Jose Garcia, this interactive live feed will be on display Oct. 8-12. #FotoFocus2014

4. Plenty Of Opportunities

Being busy isn't an excuse, unless you're out of town for the entire month of October. So yeah, this is going on for awhile. The heart of the biennial is Oct. 8-12, with guest lectures at Memorial Hall, but the exhibits themselves will be up through and, in some cases, past Oct. 31. Don't let one busy Wednesday night with the gals prevent you from coming down. Heck, turn the girls' night into a giant FotoFocus selfie party.

5. Killer Venues

There are over 50 participating venues. Did you hear that? 50+. That means there are a lot of places in Cincinnati you can cross off your art bucket list. Of course, the main hub of activity is centered around Washington Park and Memorial Hall. Clearly, you don't need a reason to head to the park. It, in and of itself, is the reason. Ok, see ya there?!

6. Stellar Programming

With over 50 venues involved, that means there are a bunch (more like a buttload) of photos for you to peruse. I especially recommend visiting the Miller Gallery in Hyde Park to see Douglas Kirkland's iconic works. He's basically photographed every Hollywood star since the '60s. Another exhibit to check out is "Eyes on the Street" at the CAM. This one explores the subject matter of street photography, getting down and dirty with the everyday folks. Finally, don't miss "Stills" at the Michael Lowe Gallery on Vine St. It's all about the freeze frame, images being captured in the middle of the action. (Thank goodness for burst mode.)

7. Only Happens Every Two Years

It's true that you have plenty of opportunities to experience FotoFocus, but ultimately it's a biennial event. That means it only happens every two years. Think about it. Two years from now we'll be on the verge of electing a new president, the *Batman v. Superman (Dawn of Justice)* movie will have been released, and your body will have endured two more years of aches and pains. So, while you can still get out of bed, you should make your way to this year's FotoFocus.

For more information on the 2014 FotoFocus Biennial, please visit the website: <http://www.fotofocusbiennial.org/>.