

2018 FALL ARTS PREVIEW

The curtain rises on an exciting new Cincinnati arts season, surrounding the debut of another iconic landmark's makeover.

By **John Fox** - September 4, 2018



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY GLUEKIT

September has arrived with its usual wealth of possibilities and opportunities, from a new school year to a new football season to the hope of cooler weather. Cincinnati's major arts organizations launch new seasons each September as well, stuffing the fall calendar with world and regional premieres, star performers, anniversary events, and must-see shows.

We've highlighted 10 can't-miss performances and exhibitions to give you a well-rounded schedule and carry you through to the end of the year. You should also find time to [rediscover Cincinnati Museum Center at Union Terminal](#), which is wrapping up a more extensive and expensive overhaul than Music Hall's. September is King Records Month, commemorating the 75th anniversary of the music studio's founding, so check out the celebrations. And don't forget the numerous community-based art galleries, performance spaces, and libraries offering easy-to-access (and often free) arts programming.

***Fly By Night* at Ensemble Theater of Cincinnati | Sept 1–29**

This darkly comic folk/rock musical explores a love triangle and a star-crossed prophecy leading up to the East Coast blackout of 1965. Michael G. Carr and Maya Farhat, who costarred in ETC's *First Date* in 2017, reunite as leads with Brooke Steele. ensemblecincinnati.org

Kaplan New Works Series from Cincinnati Ballet | Sept 13–23

The annual series showcasing dancers' athleticism, strength, and versatility features world premieres by San Francisco Ballet dancer/choreographer Myles Thatcher and Cincinnati Ballet resident choreographer Jennifer Archibald, plus, for the first time, new pieces by two company dancers, David Morse ("Gathering") and Taylor Carrasco ("Plays Well Together"). cballet.org



IMAGE BY PETER MUELLER, FEATURING DAVID MORSE & MAIZYALET VELÀZQUEZ

Over-the-Rhine International Film Festival | Sept 26–30

Rebranding the successful ReelAbilities Film Festival, this celebration of difference, diversity, and shared humanity screens more than 60 films at Woodward Theater, SCPA, Mini Microcinema, and other OTR venues. Highlights include the new Sammy Davis Jr. documentary *I Gotta Be Me* as well as studio and international films and work by local filmmakers. The Rat Pack Bash September 29 includes a Davis tribute by actor Obba Babbatunde followed by festival awards and a dance party. otrfilmfest.org

FotoFocus Biennial | Oct 4–7

The fourth FotoFocus Biennial features more than 90 lens-based projects at museums and galleries across Greater Cincinnati, Northern Kentucky, Dayton, and Columbus, including a full takeover of the Contemporary Arts Center and a pop-up “arts hub” at Washington Park. Clement Cheroux, senior curator of photography at San Francisco’s Museum of Modern Art, is the keynote speaker October 4 at the Taft Museum of Art. Major exhibitions are on display throughout October, some longer. fotofocusbiennial.org

1984 at Cincinnati Shakespeare company | Oct 12–Nov 3

This new play, adapted from George Orwell’s classic tale of a dystopian future where persecution masquerades as patriotism, was critically acclaimed in London and on Broadway. Sara Clark (*below*) and Justin McCombs handle the lead roles, while Steve McGowan and Dan Reynolds from Brave Berlin (the creative team behind Lumenocity and Blink) provide an immersive “Orwellian” multimedia design. cincyshakes.com



PHOTOGRAPH BY MIKKI SCHAFFNER PHOTOGRAPHY

Andrea Bocelli with the Cincinnati Symphony and May Festival Chorus | Oct 19

The legendary Italian-born tenor finally makes his Cincinnati debut, the first North American stop on a world tour supporting his new album, *Si*. Bocelli performs a variety of crossover contemporary pop favorites at U.S. Bank Arena accompanied by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and the May Festival Chorus. cincinnatisymphony.org

***Guys and Dolls* At the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music | Oct 19–27**

UC's College-Conservatory of Music is celebrating both the 50th anniversary of its musical theater program and the fact that CCM has the second-most graduates of any university performing on Broadway (as per *Playbill*; NYU has the edge). Adapted from a Damon Runyon story, *Guys and Dolls* follows the singing-and-dancing exploits of gambler Nathan Detroit. Tony Award nominee Pamela Myers, CCM's first musical theater grad, headlines the Birthday Cabaret showcase on September 16. ccm.uc.edu

***The Fabric of India* at Cincinnati Art Museum | Oct 19-Jan 6**

Organized by the prestigious Victoria and Albert Museum in London, this exhibition is the first to fully explore the dynamic world of handmade textiles from India, and includes work from CAM's permanent collection. Special themed events include Art After Dark (with live music and cash bar) October 26 and the annual Cincinnati Art Museum Gala November 2. cincinnatiartmuseum.org



SARI PHOTOGRAPH IKAT SARI, DESIGNED BY HITESH RAWAT (B. 1977) AND AVANISH KUMAR (B. 1985) FOR JIYO!, SILK (WEFT IKAT), POCHAMPALLY, TELANGANA, 2011, © VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, LONDON

***Cincinnati King* at Cincinnati Playhouse | Nov 3–Dec 23**

The Playhouse commissioned playwright KJ Sanchez to research, write, and direct a world-premiere musical about the city's iconic King Records studio and its groundbreaking founder, Syd Nathan. The show features a live band and actors performing such King hits as "The Twist," "Blues Stay Away From Me," "I'm Shakin'," and "Fever." cincyplay.com



IMAGE BY TONY ARRASMITH / ARRASMITH AND ASSOCIATES

***The Play That Goes Wrong* from Broadway in Cincinnati | Nov 27–Dec 2**

Sherlock Holmes meets Monty Python in this "play within a play"—now the longest running play on Broadway. The British farce presents the opening night of a theatrical murder mystery featuring an unconscious leading lady, a corpse that can't play dead, and actors who trip over everything. cincinnati.broadway.com