

In Full Swing

Fotoseptiembre opens the season with multiple exhibits

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Annual events

The biggest event in September is the Fotoseptiembre USA Festival founded 16 years ago by artists/producers Michael Mehl and Ann Kinzer. It's a huge, city-wide showcase of photography, from documentary and narrative to all sorts of experimental explorations of the medium and even photo-based multimedia installations. Of special interest this year is a group of exhibits jointly sponsored by San Antonio's Office of Cultural Affairs and the Taipei Cultural Center featuring both traditional and contemporary Taiwanese artists. The venues taking part are the San Antonio Museum of Art, the City of San Antonio International Center and, most prominently, the Mexican Cultural Institute, which will host several shows curated by Mehl himself.



Another noteworthy development is the participation of many women photographers, both local and international. The exhibit LookShe consists entirely of women's work, for instance. An exploration of self-image, it includes pieces by Elise Boularan (France), Dita Kubin (Canada), Malin Vulcano (Sweden) and Natahlie Daoust (Canada/Germany), whom San Antonians have gotten to know from previous years. In a solo show, New Orleans-based Jennifer Shaw is presenting Hurricane Story, which Mehl described as "a unique visual account of the ordeal her family went through because of Katrina."

San Antonio women are well represented as well. Besides Joan Frederick, who is the ArtBeat subject in this issue and whose work is on view at Bihl Haus Arts, several other galleries feature women artists, including Carla Veliz, Debra Sugerman, Annette Landry, Elva Salinas and Sonja Heldt Harris. For a complete listing of events, go to www.fotoseptiembreusa.com (<http://www.fotoseptiembreusa.com>).

On the music front, mid-September is traditionally the time for the Jazz'SAlive Festival to be held this year Sept. 24-25 in Travis Park (www.saparksfoundation.org (<http://www.saparksfoundation.org>)), while in mid-October you can enjoy the International Accordion Festival in La Villita (www.internationalaccordionfestival.org (<http://www.internationalaccordionfestival.org>)). Both events are high caliber and absolutely free.

Yet another big annual happening in this period (Oct. 23) is the Alamo Theater Arts Council Globe Awards Show at the Charlene McCombs Empire Theater. It's our version of the Tonys, with excerpts from nominated productions, food and glamour galore.

Around town

The venerable Witte Museum always has something exciting up its sleeve, and this period is no exception. Opening Oct. 1 is Shipwreck! Pirates & Treasures that will feature more than 500 artifacts recovered from various famous shipwrecks around the world, plus hands-on interactive pirate-themed experiences and fun computer games. Visitors will be able to see and operate some replicas of tools that are used in deep sea recovery. The Witte is also celebrating its 85th anniversary this year, but more about that in the November/December issue.

Theaters across San Antonio are gearing up for their 2011-12 lineups. The Cadillac Broadway in San Antonio season at the Majestic Theater starts with Mary Poppins (Sept. 29-Oct.9) and continues with the beloved classic Fiddler on the Roof (Dec. 6-11) and the powerful Les Miserables (Jan. 3-8). The local

premiere of *Billy Elliot The Musical*, the *Blue Man Group* and *La Cage Aux Folles* will follow later in 2012

The Classic Theater and the Vexler have announced interesting seasons too, with the latter also leaning toward modern classics this time around. Highlights at the former include *The House of Bernarda Alba* and *Six Degrees of Separation*, and at the Vexler you can see such landmark plays as *Our Town* and *A View from the Bridge*. In addition, check out Cameo Theater that has a knack for finding great comedies and revue-type musical productions. To see this month: *Fascinating Rhythm! The Musical* Magic of George and Ira Gershwin.



Fall means both the San Antonio Symphony and Opera are back with new treats for music lovers. Artistic director Sebastian Lang-Lessing, who has already won the hearts of many San Antonians, will conduct both the symphony's first Ovation Series concert, *Scheherazade* (Oct. 14-15), and the Applause Series opening event, *Paganini Rhapsody* (Oct. 28-29). Despite the names, the programs consist of multiple pieces in addition to the ones referred to in the titles, but those titles sure sound enticing (www.sasymphony.org (<http://www.sasymphony.org>)).

As for the Opera, you won't want to miss its first offering: *Romeo and Juliet*, Charles Gounod's soaring rendition of Shakespeare's story of young love (Sept. 30-Oct.2). An altogether different operatic development in town is the Sept. 24-25 premiere of *Navarro The Opera*, a newly commissioned youth opera composed by James Balentine and performed by UTSA's Lyric Theater students. Following the premiere, the opera will tour schools to educate children about Jose Antonio Navarro, a signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence (www.visitcasanavarro.com (<http://www.visitcasanavarro.com>)).



In mid-October, Ballet San Antonio is going to put everyone, youths and adults, in the mood for Halloween with its brand-new production of *Dracula* Oct. 14-15. BSA is our own outstanding professional ballet company, and the same folks who bring you *The Nutcracker* with the symphony every year. *Dracula* promises to be quite a spectacle.

Halloween is also on the schedule at the Children's Museum, but before you take the kids to its Monster Bash "spooktacular" on Oct. 30, let them first celebrate Earth Science Week and Chemistry Week Oct. 14-16 and 17-21, respectively. At the former, they'll learn to build "a test tube garden"; at the latter they'll play with explosions. That's how future scientists get a start and ultimately change our world.

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